

THE DVD LASER DISC NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER
2015
Issue #374
\$5.00

PO Box 420, East Rockaway, New York 11518-0420 • (516) 594-9304 • FAX (516) 594-9307 • www.DVDLaser.com

To love somebody

What ought to have been, and still should be, marketed as a family film—and probably would have been if America weren't so effin Puritanical—Wes Anderson's Moonrise Kingdom has instead been consigned as an art film, and remains disconnected from the many viewers, and groups of viewers gathered together on the couch, who would wholeheartedly embrace the movie's delights if they could only take the opportunity to watch it. The 2012 comedy, about a preadolescent romance, was initially released on DVD by Universal (UPC#025192115608, \$20), and has now been issued as a lovely and even joyful Blu-ray by The Criterion Collection (UPC#715515150712, \$40). Anderson's style, at first, is reminiscent of Japanese family films, filled with TV commercial-type graphics, camera tricks and unrestrained editing, the effects calming down somewhat (but never entirely) once the main plot gets underway. Set on an island off the coast of New England in the mid-Sixties, the boy is part of a scout troop on one end of the island, and the girl lives with her family on the other end. They arrange to run away, meeting in the middle of the island and hiking off in a third direction, into the wilderness, eventually camping out for a while in an idyllic cove. The film is simultaneously sassy and sweet, capturing the truths of what goes on—and doesn't go on—between boys and girls in real life, while at the same time being fanciful enough to misdirect the viewer from that same reality. The comedy comes from the characters, the irony-tinged images and the precise rhythms of the dialog, and because the film is set so far in the past, grownup viewers will see the children as representations of their own purer selves, just as youngsters will identify directly with the heroes, despite their primitive lack of access to technology.

Jared Gilman and Kara Hayward play the kids, with Bill Murray, Francis McDormand, Bruce Willis, and Edward Norton as the adults who are flummoxed by what has happened. The performances are consistently inspired, and in several instances—Harvey Keitel also shows up—it is like seeing old friends who haven't been around in a while.

Criterion's packaging is designed to celebrate the spirit of the movie and subliminally prepare the viewer for its pleasures. In the film, there is a map of the island that is shown being handled by the characters and in cutaways, and a copy of the map comes as an insert, along with a postcard and the usual booklet essay, which is designed to look like a Scout magazine.

Shot on 16mm—you'd never know it—the picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1, and the colors are finely detailed and vividly presented. The DTS sound has a compelling dimensionality and some choice directional effects. There are English subtitles, if you can figure out how to activate them. The Universal release has a weaker color transfer, as intensities of hues tend to blend together a bit too much, and the 5.1-channel Dolby Digital sound has nowhere near the same intensity. There is an audio track that describes the action ("He raises his pennant and gets struck by lightning. Everyone running towards him stops abruptly. Sam shakes his shoes off, which are on fire. Suzy and his scouts run over to him. He sits up."), alternate French and Spanish tracks, and optional English, French and Spanish subtitles.

Criterion's supplements begin with a very well made 18-minute production documentary that even captures a little tension on the set here and there in its choice selection of behind-the-scenes sequences. The narration is mostly in French, not because the program was made for French television or anything like that, but because the piece's creator was French and chooses, with Anderson's blessing, to speak in his native language for most of the piece, giving it an artsy feel. Like everything else, it's quirky, but the quality of the footage makes it worthwhile. Norton shot little movies on his cellphone between takes, and 21 minutes of them are presented. Sometimes he doesn't put it away until Anderson calls for action. Some of the movies are presented

as if they were shot on 8mm, with a whirring sound and the left side over exposed, while others look normal. Anyway, the pieces do give you a nice sense of what it is like to work on a film set, waiting around for things to happen. 9 minutes of storyboards and preliminary videos are included, with Anderson himself reading the dialog to establish the timing of the sequences, thus giving the viewer some idea of the gradual construction that goes into creating key moments in a film.

When they run off together, the girl brings along five of her favorite books, and reads them to the boy to pass the time. There is a lovely 4-minute sequence in which passages from each book have been animated. In many ways, the piece is the soul of the BD, even though it has the least to do with the movie. The auditions for the kids who landed roles in the film are included, running about 5 minutes, and while it is impractical from a rights perspective, it would be interesting to see a few who didn't get the parts, for contrast. The kids are all terrific, by the way, and Hayward especially seems posed to take the movie world by storm in a couple of years. There is a 3-minute riff on making the movie by Murray, shot on a couple of different sets; a somewhat normal 4-minute promotional featurette; a 2-minute look at past productions of Benjamin Britten's *Noye's Fludde* [Noah's Flood] (which is featured in a key flashback sequence), including a production that Anderson was in as a child; a 2-minute behind-the-scenes look at sequences involving miniatures; a very cute trailer for the film, pretending that the movie is being shown at the scout camp; and a more traditionally styled trailer that is a total knockout, presenting a perfect summary of why the movie is so good and so worth seeing.

A commentary track is featured, emceed by another one of the juvenile actors, Jake Ryan, with Anderson (who admits he lifted the title from Frank Borzage) and Criterion's Peter Becker, who then place serial phone calls to Norton, Murray, co-star Jason Schwartzman and co-writer Roman Coppola, sometimes calling them up again later on. It is not a comprehensive talk about the film by any means, but the format is entertaining, and they do touch on different aspects of the production, as well as discussing the skills of the other co-stars. Norton also summarizes what he believes to be one of Anderson's primary strengths. "I think it is fascinating that a grown human being, a grown man, can be like a child with a magic kit who is not realizing that the parents are not so much fooled by the trick as they are enjoying the fact that their child is doing an obvious effect, and I think that Wes has not grasped that his audience is with him in their love of miniatures and only Wes is concerning himself with whether the miniatures look real."

Universal's release has a good 9 minutes of amusing promotional featurettes that actually share a couple of things Criterion didn't cover ("The Sixties has a particularly high level of nostalgia. It just seemed so natural and obvious for this story"), along with the 3-minute Murray piece.

Happy Halloween from H.P. Lovecraft

A 2010 German adaptation of an H.P. Lovecraft story, The Color Out of Space, is available from BrinkVision as a *Limited Edition of 1000 Copies* Blu-ray (UPC#187830003002, \$30). The film starts out in English, with English subtitles on the screen as well, but don't panic and try to suppress them, because the next dialog sequence, which occurs several minutes later, is in German, and the film remains mostly in German after that. Shot in black and white (except for a specific effect indicated by the movie's title), the program is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1. Set apparently in the early Sixties, although there are a few anachronisms, a young American searching for his father learns that the man has been seen in a remote, wooded area of Germany, which is, **Deliverance**-style, about to be submerged because of a new dam. He travels there following an elaborate detour and finds a pretty much deserted village, where he meets a German who recognizes the father's photo. From there, the story shifts first into a

H.P. Lovecraft (Continued)

flashback from the end of the war, and then to a flashback within a flashback from before the war began, in which the German shares a tale about a meteorite dropping into a farmer's field, and the farmer and his family gradually turning catatonic as a result. The story is creepy and has plenty of atmosphere. In the other story, the German returns at the end of the war and meets the boy's father, an American G.I. who is part of a team sweeping the area. He warns the Americans not to go near the farmhouse, but they don't listen, and in fact, they drag him along. More creepy things happen, with the addition of some fairly basic special effects. Running 85 minutes, viewers who are uninterested in the Lovecraft milieu are unlikely to change their opinion, despite a few unnerving moments, and even fans will probably find that the movie is not as frenetically engaging as **The Call of Cthulhu** and **The Whisperer in the Darkness** (Aug 12). Nevertheless, the movie does deliver the basic mix of fantasy, paranoia and dread that makes Lovecraft so popular to begin with, accentuated by the black-and-white cinematography, and like most of his tales, the movie's essence lingers with you much longer than it ought to.

The image transfer is precise, although the cinematography is deliberately soft and hazy at times. The 5.1-channel Dolby Digital sound is steadfastly centered, and reasonably strong. There are sixteen subtitled options, including English and Esperanto. A 22-minute production featurette is presented in German, utilizing behind-the-scenes still photos to support the voiceover narration that talks about how the film was staged and the problems that were encountered. Unfortunately, the English subtitled is a bit sparse, so one sentence will remain on the screen for a while, as a listener can clearly hear the narrator providing more elaborate details in German. There is also a nice 7-minute segment specifically about the special effects that appear in the film and how they were accomplished, a good 7-minute piece on the science behind some of Lovecraft's speculations, an eerie 3-minute deleted scene, a 'hidden' trailer for a classic sci-fi horror feature, and an elaborate 6-minute promotional clip, with lots of special effects, for a promising fantasy feature with Lovecraftian overtones entitled *The Dreamlands*.

Finally, the value of the Blu-ray is enhanced tenfold by the inclusion of twenty-three Lovecraft stories, presented in audio-only format, drawn from a public domain website, livrevox.org, where volunteers have recorded each story for posterity. Most of the readings are careful and articulate. A few are heavily accented or rushed, and it can be jarring when you hear a word mispronounced or poorly rendered, because Lovecraft is not your typical 'pulp' writer. He is, in fact, a poet, and if you knew nothing about him and came across these recordings, you could easily guess that the readings are of poems and not prose. There are phrases strewn through every story that are repeated within that story in an almost chorus-like fashion. Not only is the vocabulary dense in each tale, but it has a specific cadence and lyricism, and it is the beauty of these harmonies that enable Lovecraft to spin his fantastic and even absurd stories with just a few sentences, gliding you into his nightmare worlds with such orchestral precision that you don't realize you have been trapped until it is too late. Most of the stories run an average of 15 minutes, with one lasting only 3 minutes and the longest lasting 35, except for a specific 81-minute presentation of *Herbert West*, which served as the basis for **Re-Animator**. The other 22 stories take up a total of 341 minutes. Nearly all of them are gems, including one, *Picture in the House*, which scared the bejeesus out of us when we first read it as an adolescent, and endeared us forever since to Lovecraft's art.

Happy Halloween from Japan!

A playful Japanese horror film that feels like a mix of Nickelodeon, Wes Craven and Douglas Sirk, **House**, is available on Blu-ray from The Criterion Collection (UPC#715515062114, \$40). The 1977 feature, directed by Nobuhiko Obayashi, is about seven schoolgirls who visit an aunt for the summer, only to discover that they are trapped in her remote mansion, which itself may be alive. From its opening moments, the film's style is wildly unconventional, with cut-and-paste special effects, abstract camera angles, and expressionistic soundstage sets. The film only runs 88 minutes, but if it went on much longer, you'd probably go bananas. One character, in fact, does go bananas, or, rather, is transmorphed into a bundle of bananas. Every time you start to think that the film is childish or silly, however, there will be a touch of nudity or some horrific gore effect to reset the tone. Undoubtedly, some viewers will not be able to get through it, but others will enjoy its vivid colors, energetic humor and unfettered imagination, and there certainly is nothing else like it in cinema, for better or worse.

Presented in full screen format only, the image transfer looks fresh, sharp and spotless, and the monophonic sound is as energetic and diverse as its images. The film is in Japanese with optional English subtitles. Along with a trailer and a succinct 4-minute appreciation of the film by Ti West, there is a terrific 46-minute retrospective interview with Obayashi and his collaborators (including his daughter, the film also anticipates **The Adventures of Shark Boy and Lava Girl**). Obayashi talks about the grand hustle he performed on Toho Studios to get the movie made (it took him two years to start production after getting the supposed 'green light'), the political dynamics on the set (he called crew members by their names, which no one had ever done before, and they became fiercely loyal to him), working with the cast, and his strategies for preparing and shooting the film's many idiosyncratic sequences.

Finally, Criterion has included a 39-minute film that Obayashi made in 1966, *Emotion*, the only long-form work that Obayashi had created previously to **House**, having forged a successful career, after film school, making commercials. And indeed, we have seen other first films by directors who have made their living doing commercials that were very similar in tone. It is also very much a first film, made with friends on less than a shoestring budget, and striving vaguely for a narrative organization to link its individual sequences. The film is silent, but is accompanied by smatterings of voiceover narration (in English), a nice light jazz musical score, and occasional sound effects. In fact, the film appears to have been re-edited by Obayashi at a later date, with kind of an introduction tacked onto the beginning and end explaining that he and his friends were on this cinematic adventure together. Filled with the typical stop-motion tricks used in Richard Lester's *Running Standing Jumping Film* and other hyper-energetic techniques more common to commercials than to features, the film kind of traces the lives of two young girls as they grow up, become friends, and go their separate ways, before running into a vampire. Presented in full screen format, the film is mostly in black-and-white, although some of it is in color from time to time. There are a few lovely moments, such a brief but memorably performed sequence where a young girl is seduced with a glass of wine. Mostly, however, the film is a concatenation of segments in which the filmmakers had a cast, a camera, a location and some spare footage, and were seeing what they could do with it, between other gigs. It gave Obayashi the confidence to start dreaming about **House**, and to that end it is worthwhile, but as a standalone piece, it has little to offer.

Running 101 minutes, the first half of Nobuo Nakagawa's **Jigoku**, another Criterion release (UPC#715515020121, \$30), depicts a group of characters, initially in Tokyo but primarily in a rural village, who all have sins in their past, which intersect with one another. Although there are touches of fantasy, the story seems straightforward at first, following one young man who is relatively innocent, but whose life is stained by the flaws of those around him. As the story progresses, however, the problems begin to accelerate and characters are killed, leading to a point where everybody gets murdered. And then, in the film's second half, there is a phantasmagorical journey through the various anterooms and layers of Hell, as the young man searches for his unborn child and comes across the different characters he had met in the film's first part. Evocatively staged, the 1960 feature has fairly primitive gore effects, and more sexuality in its opening credits than anywhere else in the film, but it does construct a striking and poetic evocation of the emotions of grief and guilt, while exploring the ways in which human civilization has tried to cope with these emotions by creating metaphors to compartmentalize them. The movie may not be as crazy as **House**, but it is still a unique creation which was very much ahead of its time, and an effective study of the relationship between horror and heartache.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1. Despite some mild aging around the edges, the colors look fresh and the image is crisp. The monophonic sound is passable, and the film is in Japanese with optional English subtitles. Along with a trailer and a nice collection of posters for Nakagawa's films and films from the production company, Shinto Studios, there is a good 39-minute retrospective documentary about the **Jigoku** and Nakagawa's career.

Joyride

The stars of **Cop Car** wouldn't be allowed, unaccompanied, in theaters to see the R-rated 2015 thriller, but that's another reason home video was invented, to get around such bothersome technicalities, and indeed, every junior high boy in America will enjoy the film wholeheartedly, as will most adults. Released on Blu-ray by Universal (UPC#025192301971, \$27), James Freedson-Jackson and Hays Wellford are the kids who find the titular vehicle in the middle of nowhere, with its keys readily available, and go for a joyride. Kevin Bacon is the nasty cop who learns a little bit too late that he should have locked his car up before he went to dispose of the body he had in the trunk. It feels like the entire 88-minute movie has been exhaustively story-boarded, but whether it actually was or not, it is that sort of systematic, shot-for-shot relentlessness that maximizes the suspense from beginning to end. Every character acts logically, and there is a thrill in discovery even before the tension really begins to mount—the sequence where the kids teach themselves how to drive is delightfully real. Set in the flat part of Colorado, the film is efficient and satisfying, and while it may initially seem like something you wouldn't in a million years let your children watch, lest they get some particularly bad ideas, the boys learn their lesson by the end, and then some.

The DVD-Laser Disc Newsletter is published during the first week of every month. Subscription prices are \$47.50 for one year or \$75 for two. Beyond the U.S.: \$70 for one year or \$130 for two. MC, VISA, Disc. & Amex: Provide acct# and expir. date. We cannot be responsible for the claims of our advertisers. Address all letters: To the Editor, The DVD-Laser Disc Newsletter, PO Box 420, East Rockaway NY 11518 or e-mail to dpratt@DVDLaser.com. Letters may be edited for length. All contents are copyright 2015 The DVD-Laser Disc Newsletter and may not be copied or reprinted without written consent. ISSN 0749-5250

The DVD-Laser Disc Newsletter is edited and published by Douglas Pratt

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1. The color transfer is clear and sharp, even in the darkest sequences. The DTS sound has a fairly basic dimensional mix, with an occasional directional effect. There are English, French and Spanish subtitles, and a passable 3-minute promotional piece with some good behind-the-scenes material.

Jackson as POTUS

Raise your hand if you want to see an engaging action film starring Samuel L. Jackson, as the President of the United States. Hard to resist, right? The 2014 Finnish feature, **Big Game**, which has been released by Anchor Bay Entertainment (UPC#013132635262, \$23), is about a group of terrorists who down Air Force One as it is coming in for a landing in Helsinki. The president is evacuated from the jet before it crashes, and plops down in the middle of a vast, mountainous woodland, where he meets a young boy who is out earning his manhood by going on his first solo hunting trip. The boy helps him escape the bad guys, and most of the 87-minute feature is a cat-and-mouse chase through the woods. Ray Stevenson co-stars as a renegade Secret Service agent, and Victor Garber, Ted Levine, Felicity Huffman and Jim Broadbent are the American officials watching the drama play out from satellite cameras as they await the arrival of a SEAL team. Onni Tommila is the young hunter. Admittedly, the movie is somewhat of a family film—Jackson's one utterance of his signature phrase (a reference to motherhood, if you've forgotten) is deliberately drowned out, and the violence tends to occur where the camera isn't pointing. The workings of national security and such are rather simplified, as well, but the film gets most of its beats just right, and the scenes with Jackson and Tommila when they are not in immediate danger are as enjoyable as the stunt sequences. It is indeed hard to resist.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The color transfer looks fine. The 5.1-channel Dolby Digital sound is not elaborately mixed, but there is a basic dimensionality during the most frantic moments. The film is mostly in English, although there is some Finnish supported by permanent English subtitles. Additionally, there are optional English and Spanish subtitles.

Impenetrable fortresses

Set immediately after World War II, a small group of Nationalist soldiers must defeat an army of bandits ensconced in a mountain fortress in Tsui Hark's grand 2014 action feature, **The Taking of Tiger Mountain**, a Well Go USA Entertainment release (UPC#812491016251, \$25). A bit reminiscent of **Seven Samurai**, the heroes set themselves up in a small farming village at the foot of the mountain, one of the many villages that are suffering from starvation because of the marauding bandits. They devise a defense for the village, while one of them goes undercover in the bandits' castle, gathering the information that will enable the others to stage a surprise assault for the movie's grand finale. There is also a wonderful sequence, bowing to the movie's title, in which one of the heroes is confronted by a Siberian tiger. Running 143 minutes, the film is framed by a contemporary story about a young man in America who suddenly feels compelled to return to China, which gives the filmmakers a chance to stage an alternate climactic scene, as if the young man were hearing the story two different ways, and otherwise justify some of the more fanciful action sequences. Nevertheless, the film is terrifically entertaining and exciting, delivering an ideal mix of adventure and action. Set in winter, it is an ideal film to watch on a snowbound night, perhaps as a double bill with **Where Eagles Dare**.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1. The image transfer looks super, and the many computer graphic effects enhance the entertainment without breaking its spell. The 5.1-channel Dolby Digital sound is also pumped up and adds to the movie's onslaught from all sides. The film is in Mandarin with optional English subtitles. There is a trailer and 21 minutes of interviews with Hark and the cast, talking about the characters and delivering at least a general idea of how the film was shot—they were really in snowy mountains for a lot of it, freezing their butts off.

Tonino Valerii's 1972 Spaghetti Western, **A Reason to Live, A Reason to Die**, is also about the taking of an impenetrable fortress. The MGM production, released by 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment and Kino Lorber Incorporated as a *KL Studio Classics* Blu-ray release (UPC# 738329169428, \$30), is set in the Southwest during the Civil War. James Coburn is the former commander of a strategically situated Union fort that has been seized by the South, with Telly Savalas as the new, self-obsessed Confederate commander. Bud Spencer plays Coburn's sidekick. The film's concept is enough to pull a viewer into the story, and Coburn is absolutely wonderful—suave, cool, mature and undistracted—which is enough to keep one watching the 92-minute film through to the end, but it isn't very well made. The fort is embedded in a cliff and there are secret passages to get inside, but the logic of how these are utilized is never clear, and while the final battle is a terrific festival of slaughter, the violence becomes abstract because you can't really follow the flow of the action. It also seems that material which explains the personalities and drives of the various characters has also been trimmed away, so that you only get hints of what might have given the movie more depth, and a reason to remain interested in its outcome. All of which makes Hark's accomplishment, despite its teasing framework, even more impressive.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1. For the most part, the picture is in excellent condition, with accurate hues and sharp contrasts. Minor instances of scattered wear are inconsequential. The monophonic sound is reasonably strong, and there is a viable musical score by Riz Ortolani. There is no captioning.

More good things

Having already made a dramatization of the supposed murders committed by New York real estate heir, Robert Durst, called **All Good Things** (Jun 11), Andrew Jarecki, who is primarily a documentary filmmaker, persuaded HBO to produce a six-part documentary about the same case, which has now been released as a two-platter set by HBO Home Entertainment, **The Jinx** (UPC#883929474226, \$20), perhaps using the DVD's outstanding supplementary features as a demonstration that there was more entertainment to be had on the topic. The film itself wasn't all that good, but Durst was happy enough with the dramatization that he agreed to do the **All Good Things** commentary track, and then participate in **The Jinx**, which says much about Jarecki's salesmanship and his evenhanded approach to the story, essentially letting each person involved speak for his or her self. Although the documentary runs a total of 269 minutes, it seems to speed right by because the tale is so fascinating. Durst's wife disappeared in the Eighties and was never found, after she was last seen entering her apartment building. Then a female friend of Durst's, who had the same basic build, was brutally murdered two decades later. And then, a year after that, a neighbor in a small apartment house in Texas where Durst was renting a room under an assumed name (and gender) was found mutilated. Jarecki, who is as much a character within the film as Durst, interviews everyone he can—the lawyers and prosecutors, the cops who worked on the cases, the reporters who followed it, the witnesses, the family members of the victims, and some members of Durst's family, as well as Durst himself, who sits for extensive questioning about every point in the timeline. For illustrative purposes, Jarecki restages some of the incidents with the faces of the characters obscured, and there is also archival footage and stills. For the first five episodes, the show is hugely entertaining, cleverly jumping back and forth so you don't know completely what has happened or will happen, just like any well made crime story. Each episode has general topic—the last murder, the 'disappearance,' the murder in the middle, a trial (with fantastic video footage of the proceedings), and the trial's aftermath.

And then, the final episode raises the quality of the documentary to a stellar level. Jarecki obtained a piece of evidence that had not been seen before, and arranged to confront Durst with it. As some of the footage shows Jarecki and his team talking about how they should structure the interview, the documentary itself becomes part of its own topic. Jarecki also expresses his opinion about Durst's guilt, and how that opinion has modified over time, again giving the entire work a more comprehensive perspective as it builds to its climax. By going 'behind the scenes,' as it were, the film reinforces to the viewer how exhaustively thorough and industrious Jarecki has been in putting it together. And then the climax of the episode, the interview that we have seen so carefully planned and plotted, is absolutely stunning, not the least reason being because it was cleverly set up in a previous episode that Durst often forgets his microphone remains on after the official filming ceases (thus 'excusing' the filmmakers from eavesdropping, as well as establishing the psychological precedent). Documentaries are random collisions between cinema and reality, kind of like particles in a collider, which shine to different degrees depending upon how effectively the two entirely different states of being conform to one another, and what Jarecki has achieved is a near perfect and quite brilliant matching of those two states.

Each platter has a 'Play All' option. The picture is presented in letterboxed format with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. 'Square' archival footage is presented correctly, in the center of the screen. The image quality is very good, and there is a sense of artistry to much of the cinematography. The musical score on the 5.1-channel Dolby Digital track has a mild dimensionality, but generally, everything is centered and clear. There is a Spanish audio track in standard stereo, and optional English, French and Spanish subtitles.

Color western

A young Gordon MacRae and a young Rory Calhoun star with the youthful Julie London and the majestically aged Jack Holt in the generically titled 1950 western, **Return of the Frontiersman**, a Warner Home Video *Archive Collection* title (UPC#883316200209, \$18). MacRae's character, the son of Holt's sheriff character, is accused of murder when someone who is dressed like him is seen racing away from the corpse on what looks like his horse. We know it isn't him, but pretty soon he is on the run and abducts the daughter of the local doctor to help him get away. The real culprit is obvious to anyone who watches movies, but that is beside the point. The full screen presentation is in color, which is nicely transferred, with minimal wear beyond a stray scratch or speckle here and there, and has fairly accurate hues. Running 74 minutes the story is enhanced by the father/son dynamic and the inevitable romance, and there are plenty of chases and gunfights to keep the energy going. MacRae even sings a little bit. In essence, it has everything you could want from a western, in all of the right proportions. The monophonic sound is okay, and there is no captioning.

Guilty pleasure

A guilty pleasure is something that is generally looked upon with negative regard, but that you like because of some personal feeling that bonds you emotionally to the work. **Star Wars** is not a guilty pleasure, because everybody likes it. **L'Eclisse** is not a guilty pleasure, even if you have had lunch at Il Fungo, because although audiences may be mystified by it, the critical consensus is that it is a masterpiece. Which brings us to **Entourage: The Movie**, a Warner Home Video Blu-ray + DVD + Digital HD (UPC#88-3929424115, \$36), and our guiltiest pleasure of 2015. The reason is simple enough, we loved the TV show. It was funny, yet benign. It was about the movies, and it compiled a wonderful ensemble of performers, playing distinctively drawn and endearing characters. True, the show, about a young, rising movie star and his childhood friends, tended to be a bit male-centric, but the female characters got their licks in often enough that even though they were not the core of the show, they were integral to its narrative and way more than the eye candy that nevertheless set the tone for much of the show's high living atmosphere. The HBO series lasted eight seasons, which we reviewed in Jul 06, Jul 09, Aug 10, Sep 11 and Jul 13. From a comedic standpoint, the show reached its peak in its third season (there is an episode about an agent trying to close a deal on Yom Kippur that had us rolling on the floor), but it continued to be charming and funny throughout its run as it explored the many different aspects of life and business in Hollywood. At the same time, it enabled the viewer to take a peek at the glamorous lives that movie stars live, or at least an extended fantasy of what that life is like, and to share a bit of it, too, as the characters became more familiar and their fortunes more secure. The end of the final season was resolute, but there was one topper that was held back, almost as if the show's creators had said to themselves, 'We'll save this idea in case we ever make a movie,' and that is indeed how the curtain closes on the film, with perfection.

As for the rest of the 104-minute feature, directed by the show's creator, Doug Ellin, its atmosphere of glamour is magnified by the widescreen cinematography and pull-out-the-stops Hollywood setting, with cameos and in-jokes galore. Adrian Grenier, Kevin Connolly, Kevin Dillon, Jerry Ferrara and Jeremy Piven star, with lots of secondary characters from the TV show appearing at choice moments. The film's funniest bits are all in its trailer, so they aren't as funny when you get to them in the movie, even when they aren't bleeped, but as you become wrapped up in the story—the star needs a last minute infusion of cash to finish the first movie he has directed, and the studio is apprehensive about giving it to him (Haley Joel Osment is highly amusing as a financier's spoiled son); the other characters also face conflicts that are complicated by the distraction the money wrangling is causing—it stops mattering that the gags are less than perfect or that the narrative turns are sometimes short of logic. It just feels so great to be back in the **Entourage** world for one last, sun-drenched blast that the film can really do no wrong.

The letterboxing has an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1, and the colors are slick, crisp and glossy from beginning to end. The DTS sound brings a solid, party-like dimensionality to the musical score. There is an audio track that describes the action ("Gorgeous women in bikinis dance by the pool and in the water."), French, Spanish and Portuguese audio tracks, English, French, Spanish and Portuguese subtitles, 3 minutes of decent bloopers, a cute 5-minute 'production featurette' for the movie-within-the-movie with everyone acting in character, 19 minutes of sensibly trimmed extended scenes, and 32 minutes of promotional featurettes that look back on the entire series as well as the film. The film is so slick and glossy that the DVD included in the set, which is also available separately (UPC# 883929424139, \$30), still looks and sounds quite good, although it can't match the intensity and precision of the BD. The DVD has the same language options except for the Portuguese, and the extended scenes are its only special feature.

Having just finished the **Entourage** movie, we turned to a 1971 'documentary' about Dennis Hopper released on Blu-ray by Etiquette Pictures, **The American Dreamer** (UPC#81456020037, \$33), and took enhanced delight in the film specifically because of its similarities and differences with **Entourage**, not just between the decades but between the reality and make-believe of the two movies. One similarity: There is a multitude of women in the backgrounds of both films. One difference: There is not a single woman in **American Dreamer** who would have made it past the person in charge of opening the mail for the casting director of **Entourage**. That is not a judgement on the value of beauty, it is the essential difference between fact and fiction.

Hopper, in 1971, was the proverbial—and could very well have been the specific—'young director with a camera and a beard' that William Holden's character, as Billy Wilder's mouthpiece, ranted about destroying the movie business in **Fedora** (another guilty pleasure of ours, but that's an entirely different story...). In the **Entourage** series, Grenier's career had a hiccup when he participated in a misguided 'art' film shot in South American, 'Medellin,' which could very well have been inspired by the art film Hopper was editing at the time **Dreamer** was shot, *The Last Movie*, which stopped his career dead in the tracks for quite a bit longer. (Ironically, it took another potential Hollywood disaster, **Apocalypse Now**, to resurrect Hopper's

subsequent career as a successful character actor, further aided by his artistic pinnacle in David Lynch's **Blue Velvet** and reaching a zenith—thus making amends for *The Last Movie* with Universal—when he singularly rescued another potential financial disaster, **Waterworld**). But more intrinsically, if there was a flaw to the **Entourage** series, it was the lack of a soul in Grenier's character. His character's friends, which the series was named after, all had rich personalities and psychological conflicts, but the problems Grenier's character faced were usually superficial, and he never seemed like more than a shell with a pretty face. **American Dreamer**, which was directed by Lawrence Schiller and L.M. Kit Carson, is entirely about how totally human Hopper is. It has a documentary format, and although Hopper is always cognizant of the way he is presenting himself, and even manipulative, he is also, in the best sense of Method Acting, being what he knows he is. He has a typically youthful and near spiritual enthusiasm for sex—Grenier's character had sex in abundance, but it always looked mechanical—and he recognizes that he is the center of attention because he has artistic ideas. Being an actor, he throws one idea out there after another, figuring one of them has got to sound valid. When Grenier's character comes up with an idea, it's a surprise, because no one ever knows what he is really thinking.

Running 80 minutes, the first part of **American Dreamer** is set in Los Angeles, where Hopper is working on the editing of *Last Movie* and resisting the desperate calls from the studio executives for information—specifically still photos and a plot summary—about the film. The majority of the movie is set in Taos, New Mexico, where Hopper has a dwelling and where he brought the editing of *Last Movie*. That project, however, soon disappears from the documentary's consciousness, as the movie turns to Hopper reacting to the filmmakers and to his guests at the house. The filmmakers do their best to open him up, and since, like his character in **Easy Rider**, he is compulsively chatty, he readily cooperates, even though he doesn't really have all that much to say. He repeats the anti-establishment platitudes of the day—something about 'evolution' leading to 'revolution'—and points out with some validity that his **Easy Rider** character, smuggling cocaine across the border for an untaxed profit, is no more evil than a wealthy investor hiding his profits in 'Swiss banks.' Some of the things he says are completely off base—he probably spoiled his chance to become a spokesperson for the libraries of America when he says, "I don't believe in reading. I don't care about reading. It means nothing to me. I believe that by using your eyes and your ears, you will find everything that there is, and you don't have to read about it," while other pronouncements could fit on a greeting card. "I believe in love and hate. You either love someone, or you hate them, and if you're healthy, you try to spend your time with people that you love rather than people that you hate."

Along with examining the photographs he has taken (Grenier's character never had a hobby), he talks about the art he has on his walls, and he talks a lot about sex. There are a couple of women in the house, and a few unidentified men seem to appear and disappear at the edges of the screen. So eventually, the filmmakers get around to asking Hopper what his greatest fantasy is, and he says he would like to go to the hot springs with a large number of women, which leads to the film's wonderful and perhaps unintended punchline. The filmmakers bus in more than a dozen willing females, who all squeeze into his living room. It's the middle of winter, so they can't go to the hot springs. A few of them do eventually get naked, but the opening Mediterranean yacht sequence of **Entourage**, it is not. Here is a big, and at the time, hugely successful movie star, living his movie star dream. He's got a room filled with girls, who are there because of his fame and charisma. And he doesn't know what to do with them.

The full screen picture is naturally grainy, but a decent amount of color has been coaxed out of the source material, and for a documentary shot under Spartan conditions, it is in decent shape. The monophonic sound also has a limited range, but is in passable condition. The movie has quite a few original songs—at least an album's worth—and one of its failings may be that not one of the numbers is any good. There are optional English subtitles, but no menu choice to activate them. The menu does have one innovation we have never seen before, however. Instead of listing chapters, the movie's eight reels are identified, on the menu, as, "Reels." Along with a 3-minute montage of stills from the film, there is a 7-minute piece that explains how the original negatives to the film were lost and how the presentation was coaxed together out of the only four existing prints, and an excellent 30-minute retrospective documentary about shooting **Dreamer**, about *Last Movie*, and about Hopper. A DVD platter is included in the set that is a duplicate of the BD. Since the image and sound quality of the film are limited to begin with, there really isn't much of a difference between the two.

In the Dark in 3D

We have always wanted to see a film noir in 3D, with deep shadows and accentuated camera angles, but the 1953 Columbia Pictures production released on Blu-ray by Twilight Time, **Man in the Dark 3D** (UPC#851789003719, \$60), as enjoyable as it is, is not that movie. The film is mostly overlit and blandly staged until its big finale, which follows the Anton Chekhov 3D-movie dictum—a rollercoaster glimpsed in the first act is going to be ridden in the third.

Edmond O'Brien plays a gangster with surgically induced amnesia. As he is convalescing, the members of his old gang abduct him to find out where he hid the stolen cash he now has no memory of. They don't believe he doesn't remember it at first, and neither does his old girlfriend, played by Audrey Totter, but after getting knocked around a little, and kissed a little more, things start to come back. With both the gang and the police hot on their trails, O'Brien and Totter's characters race to retrieve the money.

The black-and-white picture is presented in full screen format, and in both 2D and 3D. The print looks gorgeous. It is spotless, with crisp lines and detailed contrasts. It's just a shame that nothing comes of it. The opening shot, for example, reminded us precisely of a shot from one of the antique 3D films in Flicker Alley's **3-D Rarities** (Jul 15), showing a flat building in the background, with a hanging branch and the top of a bench in the foreground providing the only depth perspective. A lot more fun is the shot of several doctors, peering straight at the camera, i.e., at you, and poking long, needle-sharp instruments in your direction. Birds, bullets and fists also fly out from the screen, though awkwardly. Totter's bust may not be the most prominently featured in a 3D film, but it is there, like a pair of small helmets, with spikes. As usual, the more satisfying effects are simply the arrangements of the characters in a room, although there is a nice rooftop chase, along with a car chase and, of course, the amusement park finale. At first, the rollercoaster scene seems like a total ripoff, befitting a 67-minute film (the wishful thinking jacket cover lists it at 70 minutes). The cars are 3D, but the rollercoaster ride is rear-projected and flat (the sequence actually works a little better than you'd expect), but then, the stuntmen really get out and start climbing around on the rollercoaster tracks and frame, with the cars whooshing by, and the 3D is as vivid as it is lively.

The monophonic sound is very clean, and the film's stock music score has been isolated on another track, in case you want to lift any of the pieces for your own 3D movie. Anyway, it's a nice addition. There are also optional English subtitles and a trailer, featuring O'Brien, who comes out from behind a door and says you can't see any of the film until you come back to the theater and watch it for real.

Taking more than one Pit Stop

A 1969 car racing feature directed by Jack Hill that is so good, it has been released by two different companies on Blu-ray. **Pit Stop** is available from both New Horizons Code Red (UPC#73829182229, \$23) and Arrow Video (UPC#760137764298, \$30).

Opening with an awesome blues guitar musical score, the film is about a heartless driver, played by Richard Davalos, trying to work his way up the ladder, from drag strip street racing to legitimate stock car contests, with most of the story depicting his experiences in 'Figure 8' racing, which is basically a step above demolition derbies (the cars must cross an intersection twice in every lap). For one thing, the 91-minute feature is jam packed with racing footage and, given the nature of the races, smashups. If you're a fan, or if you can simply imagine the average drive-in theater attendee (at least the one behind the wheel), you immediately recognize how rich the film is in delivering what it promises to deliver. Davalos' character is something of a jerk, but the other drivers, the villains, are snottier, so he exudes enough sympathy to hold your favor as he learns how to play the game. The actresses, including Beverly Washburn and a surprise appearance by the talented young Ellen Burstyn when she was working as Ellen McRae, are striking, and the love scenes are constructed with a French New Wave tone that is downright exciting given the film's setting and genre—not only does Hill lift the concept of fragmented body parts from Jean-Luc Godard, but he uses it to the same purpose, conveying the hero's emotional disconnection as he simultaneously expresses the sensuality of the interlude. But what sold us the most on Hill's accomplishments as a director was the performance he extracted from Brian Donlevy, who plays Davalos' financial backer, in his final film appearance. Every generation has its movie stars like Donlevy, who end up being carnival geek performers that will appear in any film they are offered for the pocket money (think Gary Busey or Jan Michael Vincent). But Hill draws out a superb performance from Donlevy and uses him to perfection, first as the out-of-place old guy at the drag races, trolling the young drivers; and then as the capitalist manipulator, who plays his drivers against one another to build up his own purse. Crashes, guitars, sex, cinematography, editing, performances—there is not another racing car movie ever that gives you so much so well and so compactly.

The black-and-white film is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1. The Arrow release, which also has a DVD platter with identical special features, is the better of the two. The picture is sharper and smoother, and contrasts are better detailed. The monophonic sound is also significantly stronger. Arrow's release includes a terrific 15-minute retrospective interview with Hill, who explains succinctly what he wanted to accomplish and how he set about doing it, along with a nice 17-minute interview with co-star Sid Haig (as the villain, his performance is admittedly over the top, but to the point where the wildness of it fits in well with the rest of the film—his character has 'STP' tattooed on his knuckles) talking about the film's rampant product placement, his career, his fellow cast members, and the racing drivers he met; a good 12-minute retrospective interview with producer Roger Corman, who talks about why he started making independent films and about Hill. Hill is also featured on a commentary track with his biographer, Calum Waddell,

talking in more detail about the film and about Hill's overall career. Waddell occasionally tries to reach too far for an interpretation or some gossip, but Hill deftly shifts into vague mode until the topic returns to something he's comfortable addressing. He talks about ultimately being typecast himself as a blaxploitation director, and the other frustrations he encountered in Hollywood, as well as the pleasure he felt when fans such as Quentin Tarantino began promoting his work after he had retired.

He also talks specifically about working with the actors on the film and how he coaxed such a good performance out of Donlevy. "When I first met Brian, the first thing he said to me, he says, 'I don't act.' Well, come on Brian, you know. Brian Donlevy is Brian Donlevy. But Dick Davalos was a method actor. Very much so. And this case I set up scenes, quite often, where I would just really let the actors do their method thing, and then I would edit a lot of that out in the editing. But these different acting styles, people had warned me, 'Oh, you've got contrasting acting styles, that's not very good,' but in this case, I felt that different acting styles were different characters, and it worked just fine."

The Code Red release, which has no captioning, comes with a 4-minute introduction to the film; a different 5-minute interview with Corman that is still pretty decent, talking about Hill's talents and the film's strengths; and a different 16-minute interview with Haig, who tells some of the same stories but also talks about his other earlier films.

A fresh Contamination

We reviewed Blue Underground's release of the enjoyable 1980 Luigi Cozzi science-fiction thriller, **Contamination**, in Jun 03. Arrow Video has now released the film on a two-patter Blu-ray and DVD set (UPC# 760137736899, \$40). Since Blue Underground's transfer already looked quite good, with clean source material, fresh hues and solid blacks, and the sound was already remastered for DTS stereo (there is a general dimensionality, but not very many separation effects), there is little improvement that Arrow can offer to that aspect of the presentation. It looks the same. The sound has a bit more energy—there is an enthusiastic musical score by Goblin—and there are optional English subtitles.

Running 95 minutes, the heroes have to track down the source of basketball-sized eggs that make people explode, going from New York to South America as they uncover a conspiracy behind the horrors. The film is effectively paced, and as derivative as it may seem at times, you still don't know where the narrative is heading. There is a great deal of gore and goo, and the feature is both creative and enjoyable.

Blue Underground had a couple of decent supplementary features, but it is in that regard that the Arrow Blu-ray has a good deal more to offer. There is a really great 23-minute promotional interview with Cozzi from the early Seventies, in which he explains how many of the special effects were achieved and also talks about other aspects of the filmmaking process, such as how walls that look like they are made of concrete are actually wood, and how parts of the film that were shot in New York and in South America are seamlessly edited with footage shot on an Italian soundstage. He discusses the generation of the film, as well, identifying the various influences, such as **Alien** and **Invasion of the Body Snatchers**, and explains what he wanted to accomplish. That is followed up with a terrific 43-minute talk by Cozzi from 2015, in which he goes over his entire career, from his days as a teenager, trying to write as an 'Italian correspondent' for American science-fiction magazines, to presenting a teaser for a 2016 thriller that he has coming out. He talks about the limitations of Italian productions, and is proud of the ways in which he utilized special effects and other filmmaking tricks under such restricted conditions. "Even as a child, I realized that a lot of these films that I watched at the time in the late Fifties and early Sixties were so bad and so stupid that if I made one it couldn't possibly be any worse." Also featured is a good 41-minute Q&A after a screening of the film, with Cozzi and star Ian McCulloch, a 17-minute overview of how Italian movies in the Seventies and Eighties were imitating popular English language films ("It's a very nimble industry, so in the time it would take Hollywood to make one, say, **Alien** knock off, you know, the Italians could have made ten of them, and have them in theaters. And, oddly enough, almost all of them would make money."), the pages of a graphic novel adaptation in still frame (it is kind of difficult to read unless you have a really big screen; the DVD-ROM presentation of the same materials on Blue Underground's release was easier to manipulate), a trailer, and an 11-minute interview with one of the members of Goblin. He spends most of the time giving a complete history of the band's success and the turnover of band members, but he does mention scoring the film in passing, and how much he enjoyed doing a science-fiction feature.

Finally, there is a heartfelt commentary track by Fangoria editor Chris Alexander (recorded poorly, the audio is rather fuzzy, but coherent), who shares what he knows about the production, Cozzi, the cast, the crew and Goblin, and also talks extensively about his own love affair with the film, which began when he was a child. It is this love that enables him to overlook the movie's all too obvious faults. "You have to suspend a lot of disbelief to love **Contamination** because all the criticism it gleans from being incoherent and ridiculous I'm not going to debate, because it is incoherent and ridiculous, in its plotting, anyways. It doesn't make much sense. It's actually quite silly, and ill-thought out. It's pretty goofy."

Crazy Miike

As wild a movie as you will ever find, Takashi Miike's 2001 comedy? musical? romance? family film? gore fest?, **The Happiness Of The Katakuris**, is available from Arrow Video in a Blu-ray and DVD two-platter set (UPC#760137736790, \$30). Wishing to repair his dysfunctional family, a shoe salesman purchases an Alpine inn that the whole family will have to help to run. The problem is that every guest who stops by dies, and the heroes feel compelled to bury the bodies in the woods, in order to avoid the bad publicity. The hero's daughter meets a man in a uniform, who tells her that he is a disgraced member of Britain's royal family, and while it is fairly obvious that he is nothing of the sort, she believes him. There are a few more minor subplots, as well, but the narrative is secondary to the film's impact, basically giving the movie an excuse to establish the characters. The film has stop-motion animation sequences scattered through it, not to mention zombies, and occasionally utilizes blue screens to disconnect the characters from their real world surroundings. The film is also a musical, with the song numbers increasing in occurrence as the film advances. One number is even presented as a karaoke sequence. Viewers will be completely forgiven if they believe the 113-minute film is a terrible, ridiculous mess, but others will take total delight in its anything-can-happen atmosphere and invigorating creativity, not to mention its unifying theme about the importance of family.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1. The color transfer is bright and sharp. The sound is listed as stereo, but remains steadfastly centered, even during the musical numbers. Nevertheless, it has a great deal of energy and is effectively detailed. The film is in Japanese, with optional English subtitles. The DVD included in the set is almost as nice, although the music sequences are subliminally more involving on the BD platter. All of the special features are repeated on the DVD.

There is a nice 31-minute production featurette that goes behind the scenes, primarily looking at the cast trying to master the choreography, but also touching on other aspects of the live part of the production. Miike expresses a genuine sentiment about the power of family relationships, and the piece concludes beautifully, with different members of the crew singing lines from one of the songs. A 39-minute interview with Miike from 2015 looks back on what he wanted to accomplish with the film, how he went about doing it, and where he feels that he succeeded. Along with a trailer and a TV commercial, there are 24 minutes of interviews with Miike and the cast from 2001, a good 6-minute piece about the animated segments, and a both promising and disappointing 24-minute overview of Miike's career, in English, which does give you tantalizing clips from a lot of different movies, but fails to get much beyond reeling off successes and awards, nor mentioning at all that a number of his really great movies are remakes of previous Japanese classics. **Happiness of the Katakuris**, incidentally, was inspired by a Korean feature, *Quiet Family*, that Miike never saw.

Miike supplies a commentary track for the film in Japanese, which is supported by English subtitling, but it is also 're-created' by English speaking actors on a second track. He is joined by film critic Tokitoshi Shiota, who has a small (or, rather, brief) role in the film. They don't say too much about the production, except to occasionally explain where something was shot or how a performer was chosen. Instead, they focus on the film's quirks, and add their own appreciative perspectives to what they are watching. Referencing a supposed incident where a character soiled himself (there is a very minor sound effect that suggests this), Miike is proud that he did not bring too much emphasis to the incident. "I wanted everyone from kids to old people to enjoy this film, so I refrained myself from vulgarity of that sort." And then the actor appears in the next scene with a different pair of pants. "Maybe it's necessary to explain these things, so the audience truly understands, but there's more enjoyment of a movie when you find these minor faults by yourself, don't you think? And imagine what you will of them." He also explains how to get around music rights. "This song was scripted. She was good at playing the flute, too. The only thing is, there was some problems with the rights to this song, so I asked her to play it badly on purpose. It's hard to play bad on purpose, you know, but she did a really good job."

Additionally, Miike biographer Tom Mes, who also made the career overview piece, provides a more standard and informative commentary track, in English, identifying the various players and running through their careers, sharing what he knows about the production, and talking about Miike's favorite themes. He also offers a very good interpretation of the film's craziness, pointing out that the narration is by the little girl in the family, so the entire film is sort of being told from the child's perspective, and would therefore be open to the animation sequences, blue screen manipulations and every other impulsive eccentricity.

Two Faces

Hidden in the 'Bonus' section, with really tiny type, the Italian Spaghetti western, *Faccia a Faccia* runs 112 minutes, while its English language counterpart, **Face to Face**, which is the official title of the Kino Lorber Incorporated *KL Studio Classics* Blu-ray (UPC#738329171029, \$30), runs 93 minutes. Sort of like **Breaking Bad**, Gian Maria Volonte portrays a New England professor who has to travel to the West because he has tuberculosis. He falls in with a bandit played by Tomas Milian and gradually but inexorably learns to shoot and plan robberies and kill people. Although

the picture quality is nicer on the English language version, the longer Italian version is preferable because you see more steps in the skill development and psychological transition that Volonte's character undergoes. On the whole, the film is fairly enjoyable because there are some decent action scenes and a consistently satisfying atmosphere—directed by Sergio Sollima, there is an Ennio Morricone musical score—but what makes the film unique is its portrait of an innocent man making choices that change the nature of his soul, and it is the longer version that better delineates those choices.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1. As we mentioned, the colors on the English version are bright and accurate, and wear is minimal. The colors on the Italian version are rather faded, and the picture overall looks more aged. The monophonic sound is also a bit stronger on the English language version. The Italian version comes with permanent English subtitles.

Mo' Joe

We reviewed the 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment release of Sergio Corbucci's **Navajo Joe** in Jul 08. Fox and Kino Lorber Incorporated have now released the 1967 Spaghetti Western again, as a *KL Studio Classics* title (UPC#738329169121, \$20). Burt Reynolds stars as the title character, who is shadowing a large group of bandits and picking them off one by one. Running 93 minutes, the first half is highly entertaining, as Reynolds' character, almost like a comic book superhero, continually foils the head bandit's schemes. The story eventually downshifts, as it must in order to be more than just a strung together series of action sequences, and the logic deteriorates in a why-don't-the-bad-guys-just-shoot-him manner, but on the whole, the film is a satisfying experience, and it also features a highly addictive musical score—built around a chorus repeating the hero's name over and over with an equal emphasis on every syllable—by Ennio Morricone.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. In a direct comparison to the earlier Fox release, the picture transfer is a little sharper and the monophonic sound is a little crisper, but the two presentations are fairly similar. There is no captioning. The Kino release is accompanied by a commentary track from Kino's Gary Palmucci, who explains that the late owner of Kino, Donald Krim, worked at United Artists in the Sixties and Seventies, which was one of the motivations for Kino having picked up a lot of the MGM/Fox titles for re-release. He also promotes Kino's other titles as connections to them pop up during the course of the film. There are gaps in his talk, especially in the second half, but he does provide background information about many of the members of the cast and crew, and a bit of history about the film's production. While he points out choice moments as they appear, he does not delve too deeply into a critical analysis of the film's style or Corbucci's techniques. He does, however, have a lot to say about Morricone. "I'm sure that many of the music and film buffs who will check out this commentary can remember the first time they heard a Morricone score in a movie theater, and probably how dramatically it affected their perceptions of how a score can propel and personify the many dimensions of even the most nose-to-the-ground genre picture."

Written, produced and directed by Samuel Fuller

Rod Steiger is an embittered Confederate soldier who renews his life when he joins a Sioux village in Samuel Fuller's **Run of the Arrow**, a 1957 RKO Radio Picture production released by Warner Home Video as an *Archive Collection* title (UPC#888574122805, \$22). Despite the casting of Charles Bronson as the village chief and Jay C. Flippen as the hero's Sioux mentor, the film provides a very positive depiction of Native American society and culture. Fuller's script is superbly composed, and his direction is equally masterful, so that along with simply enjoying the 86-minute adventure, with its action and romance, viewers with an even casual interest in the art of motion pictures will be spellbound by Fuller's choices and fascinated by his expedient compromises. Brian Keith and Ralph Meeker co-star, as sympathetic and unsympathetic cavalry officers, and Sarita Montiel is the Sioux maiden who captures the hero's heart.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. A rare foray into color by RKO, contrasts are a little weak and the source material is a bit worn. Hues lack the richness of a more sophisticated studio production, but on the whole, the image is in passable condition and the simple presence of color enhances the thrill of Fuller's artistry significantly. The monophonic sound is best kept at a modest volume, but is tolerable. There is no captioning.

Fuller's black-and-white story of an American in post-War Germany, **Verboten!**, a 1958 RKO production, is also available as a Warner *Archive* title (UPC#883316259429, \$18). The film opens with some decent battle sequences, but then settles on a soldier played by James Best, who is rescued by a German girl and stays there after the war is over, as a civilian employed by the Americans, so he can marry her. Susan Cummings co-stars. The couple must cope with the natural suspicions and conflicts that their relationship would generate, and the briefly active Nazi underground movement complicates matters further. Running 93 minutes (the DVD is not time encoded), the film does not have the clearly expressed story arc that **Run of the Arrow** has, but it still confidently constructed and executed thanks to Fuller's masterful command of his craft. Fuller infuses the film with a good deal of history, and you know in your heart that it is precise in its accuracy,

even though there is a fictional drama draped over it. Where **Run of the Arrow** was sort of a formula effort, Fuller is expressly striving to create something more complex and enduring with **Verboten!**, and while it may not be as viscerally satisfying, the 'first hand' atmosphere it achieves has a value that increases with every passing year.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. Promoted as a *Remastered Edition*, the picture is slick and spotless, sometimes creating more of a contrast to the extensive stock footage Fuller employs, but generally conveying a crisp and vivid replication of his staging. The monophonic sound is fine (Fuller includes a lot of riffs from Beethoven and Wagner in the movie's musical score) and there is no captioning. A trailer is included that emphasizes the film's more lurid moments, promising more in that regard, and more action, than there actually is.

Indian attack

We are in full support of the movement to have the Washington D.C. professional football franchise change its name, and we have no patience for **Birth of a Nation** despite its obvious brilliance as a milestone in the formation of cinematic art. But we love westerns, and it's going to take more generations than ours to disregard western films because they sometimes utilize Native-Americans as the villains. Often, in fact, the Native-Americans aren't the villains so much as they are simply the deadliest challenge in the western landscape. Every western is different. Some movies will give the Native-Americans personalities and make them characters, while other movies will just set them up as figures to be knocked over before the equally nondescript cavalry men and pioneers on the hero's side are knocked over. In those movies, they're essentially robots, which, in fact, is what they have been replaced with in the sci-fi and comic book action features that have taken the place of the western in the hearts of so many younger moviegoers. As a body of work, however, the western is just too much fun to disparage the bad karma it once propagated, especially now that most viewers understand the basic falsity that guided the use of Native-Americans in western films. If anything, it now brings an additional darkness and richness to what were once knee-jerk depictions of good and evil. The same smiling cowboy in his same white hat is not as clean cut as he once was—but that adds to the drama, the irony and the social fraudulence of his actions. So, knowing what we know now, westerns are better than ever.

Sterling Hayden is a deserter who, in trying to get away from his former life by hightailing it out west, stumbles across a massacre of cavalry soldiers. He dons an officer's uniform to help guide another cavalry unit, and the wagon train it is protecting, to safety, through 'hostile territory,' in **Arrow in the Dust**, a terrific 1954 Allied Artists feature released by Warner Home Video as an *Archive Collection* title (UPC#888574144630, \$22). At one point, to gain time on their savage pursuers, they leave a wagon full of whisky behind, and sure enough, it stalls the attackers long enough that they can reach the next defensible position. The leader of the Indian attackers has a majestic countenance, but otherwise the attackers have no differentiation or distinctiveness. Probably played by the same stuntmen a dozen times over, they are the threat, which wounds and whittles away the numbers of the heroes, despite accruing a greater number of casualties themselves. The film, running 80 minutes, is, of course, about the arc that Hayden's character takes as his conscience rises to meet his obvious leadership skills. There is a reason, too, that the Indians are attacking this wagon train in particular and, hence, not all of the villains have bows and arrows. Running 80 minutes and directed by veteran Lesley Selander, the film has a number of decent action sequences and a strong moral conflict—will Hayden's character duck out on the group before it gets to the fort?—that is reinforced by the forward motion of the wagon train journey. It's an entertaining ride all the way.

Colleen Gray co-stars, and Jimmy Wakely is on the wagon train to sing a couple of songs. Lee Van Cleef is in there somewhere, as well. The picture is presented in letterboxed format, with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The source material is uneven in quality, with noticeable wear at times, and inconsistent contrasts, but the colors and fleshtones usually look fresh, and the image is often reasonably sharp. The monophonic sound is fairly strong, and there is no captioning.

Where is William Faulkner when you need him

Ever since **Jaws**, filmmakers have been trying to do 'Jaws with bears,' but it never really works. It's not that the films aren't exciting, it is that the animals are too cuddly-looking to be monsters. The movies that do it best, like **The Edge** (May 98), accept that bears are part of the wilderness and that it is the humans that are intruding. Charlie Chaplin had the right idea in **The Gold Rush**. Anyway, Sony Pictures Home Entertainment has released a 2015 concoction that may have played in theaters for a few minutes, but basically went straight to video, **Into the Grizzly Maze** (UPC#04339646-0829, \$27). A bear kills a couple of poachers. A ranger, his back-from-prison-but-competent-woodsman brother, a female bear scientist and a female bear photographer go deep into the forest to track the marauding animal, and mayhem ensues. The filmmakers try really hard to make you jump out of your seat with each attack, and the last 20 or so minutes feature an epic battle between what is left of the heroes and the animal, but when it's all over, you're really kind of sorry about who wins and who loses. The difference is simple. Sharks want to eat, bears just want to be left alone, and humans want to destroy everything, for a profit.

The scenery is pretty. The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The colors are tonally blue and green and are precisely delineated, and the CGI bear is persuasive, as are the many gore effects. The 5.1-channel Dolby Digital sound has a few nice atmospheric touches and some noises that add to the height that you leave your seat at certain moments. There is an alternate French audio track and optional English and French subtitles. Thomas Jane, James Marsden, Piper Perabo and Michaela McManus star, with Scott Glenn and Billy Bob Thornton on hand for some movie star dicing and shredding.

White slavery thriller

Set in Tangier, the 1967 American International Pictures white slavery tale, **House of 1000 Dolls**, released on Blu-ray by MGM, 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment and Kino Lorber Incorporated as a *KL Studio Classics* title (UPC#738329163624, \$30), features Boris Karloff and Martha Hyer as a stage magician act that is tied into the kidnappings of mostly unattached European girls. A businessman played by George Nader starts snooping around when one of his acquaintances disappears, and eventually upends the organization—there certainly aren't a thousand girls at the brothel, by the way, more like a dozen or so, although they are all dressed in bikinis and such. Price is almost always wonderful and the few scenes in which he appears are a delight. The film also makes good use of its Spanish locations, so it has a nice, basic atmosphere. There is a terrific, cringe-inducing sequence where a young girl in a negligée tries to escape by climbing down a building and running through a garden, until she is tackled by a guard. Ouch. Running 96 minutes, the story, however, has more holes than the negligée by the end of the escape, and while you can be entertained by the movie's momentum, there is not enough intrigue or excitement to draw you back for another visit.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1. The first couple of reels are a bit worn and faded, but after that, the colors brighten and wear becomes less common. The monophonic sound, however, has a bad reverb throughout the film, which adds a strain to the movie's entertainment. There is no captioning. There is a gossipy commentary featuring film historians David Del Valle and David Decoteau. They do talk a little bit about the film's history and production, but mostly they riff on the various members of the cast and crew, sharing background information and anecdotes about careers and private lives. "Like George [Nader] said to me about making these kinds of movies, 'Well, first of all, David, I was a pretty good actor, and I was photogenic, and [producer] Harry Alan Towers respected the fact that I could hold a scene together.' You see, finding leading men that were affordable, that enjoyed these European locations and would work for the kind of money that Harry was offering, I think that's why George did two or three pictures for Harry Alan Towers, and he delivered. This movie is watchable because of George Nader, Martha Hyer and Vincent Price. Because they're professionals, they look great on camera, and they do their job. I think the failing grace [of this movie] is when the script doesn't hold up."

Hijacking your attention

TV movies are amazing accomplishments. Simultaneously bland and captivating, the best ones are immune to their own innocuousness as their pacing and plotting are almost scientifically devised to keep you watching and discouraging you from abandoning the program during a commercial break, something that becomes even more magnetizing when the commercials are eliminated. A 1985 telefilm about an airplane hijacking, **Hostage Flight**, released by Warner Home Video as an *Archive Collection* title (UPC#88-3316227640, \$22), has the additional embarrassment of depicting the shake-your-head-in-hindsight lax boarding procedures that allow all manner of firearms and radical terrorists onto the plane before it takes off, thus turning a simple interstate hop into a mid-Atlantic journey of horror, especially after the terrorists actually begin executing passengers. When a feature film is stupid, it is usually just stupid, but often times with a telefilm, it is clear that the stupidity has been conceived and executed with calculated intelligence. The characters have to be a little more flamboyant or archetypal than real airplane passengers, so that the drama can expend fewer valuable minutes of running time establishing personalities and psychologies. Whatever seems illogical about the choices the characters make or the suspiciously unlikely decisions the authorities make is immediately superseded by the suspense and excitement these choices and decisions create. Even the economy class cabin in the airplane feels spacious and uncluttered, and nothing like the sardine packing that would be found in a real jet, yet it is required, once again, not because a lax budget prevents it from being dressed and populated properly, but because the momentum of the story itself would be hindered by the distractions of clutter. There is just enough there to convey the idea of it, and as a result, all the viewer wants to see is what is going to happen next, and next, and next. Finally, the film's very last act is legitimately unique and inspired, to the point where the entire film would be worth screening in a classroom, followed by discussion of morality and ethics. Running 96 minutes, not only is the movie an entertaining ride, but unlike some, you don't regret the time spent once it is over.

The best known stars in the cast are Ned Beatty, Jack Gilford, Frank McRae and Dee Wallace Stone. The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The colors look very fresh, with minimal wear. The monophonic sound is fine, and there is no captioning.

Lost in the Antarctic

A movie that is wrong in so many ways, it becomes fascinating entertainment. MGM's 1964 Antarctic comedy directed by Delbert Mann, **Quick! before it melts**, has been released by Warner Home Video as an *Archive Collection* title (UPC#88857414739, \$22). Firstly, George Maharis is top billed, but has a supporting part, while second-billed Robert Morse, doing his **How to Succeed** shtick, is the film's real star. The two are a photographer and journalist respectively, sent to Antarctica by their editor because Morse's character is involved with the editor's daughter and the editor wants to quash the relationship. On their way, there is a lengthy layover in New Zealand, where both men become involved in fresh romantic relationships. Then they are shipped off to a bearded male-only enclave on the southern continent, unable to drum up any newsworthy stories until they devise a scheme to ship in some girls, including the two they met in New Zealand, and chronicle the effect this has upon the research community. James Gregory, Norman Fell (even more unctuous than usual) and Michael Constantine (as a Russian) co-star. The film footage of Antarctica is nicely blended with the staged material, and there are intelligent penguins and seals to liven things up amid the otherwise forced slapstick. But tonally, the film is all over the place—Morse's character is, in effect, appealingly unfaithful to his fiancée—and seems to last much longer than its 98 minutes because of the segmented nature of its narrative. Additionally, Morse's charm is in the way he works the dimples in his cheeks, so having them covered with a beard for half the movie prevents him from utilizing one of his primary performance tools. And since Maharis' only appeal is his looks, covering them up pretty much erases him completely from the screen.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The image is a bit soft from time to time, but the colors are reasonably good and the source material has a tolerable number of stray speckles. The monophonic sound is passable. There is no captioning.

How to succeed in Hollywood

A charming Paramount comedy about Hollywood from 1931 has been paired with its 1947 MGM remake in the Warner Home Video *Archive Collection* release, **Make Me a Star/Merton of the Movies** (UPC#8833-16258255, \$20). Joan Blondell is top-billed with Stuart Erwin in the 1931 feature, *Make Me a Star*, while Red Skelton, in the Erwin role, gets top billing in the 1947 feature, *Merton of the Movies*, and Virginia O'Brien has the Blondell part. The two films don't really make a very good double bill, however, and you really need to take a break between watching them. The main reason for this is that *Make Me a Star* is so good that *Merton of the Movies*, in a direct comparison, can seem overplayed. Erwin portrays a small town grocery clerk who dreams of going to Hollywood to become a western star, thinking that he is qualified after he completes a correspondence course. Arriving in Hollywood, he pretty much camps out in a casting office until an actress, played by Blondell, takes pity on him and helps him get his foot in the door. What happens after that is best left to be discovered. Ben Turpin has a kind of cameo co-starring role, but what really jumps out at you is how much Blondell, as befits her role, is a 'star' in comparison to the secretaries in the office and the wannabes in the waiting room. She exudes a glow that immediately sets her apart, and makes the hero's quest seem all the more unattainable. Erwin is also terrific as the self-effacing and hopelessly out-of-his league sad sack. Running 89 minutes, the film is a lovely little gem that succeeds specifically by not trying too hard.

The basic premise and the character names are carried over to *Merton of the Movies*, as are the primary plot points, although other aspects are substantially changed. In *Make Me a Star*, it is the talkie era, but in *Merton*, the setting is the silent era. Skelton's character wants to be a movie detective rather than a cowboy, and the way he gets to Hollywood is a little bit different. The big difference is Skelton's slapstick, which, naturally, the film incorporates. If Erwin is still fresh in your mind, then Skelton's routines take you out of the film, because they are star turns from a character who is specifically not a movie star. It is O'Brien, despite her character's self-confidence, that seems secondary when Skelton shares the screen with her. Running 89 minutes, the story still works well enough to be serviceable entertainment, but the longer time you take between watching the first and the second film, the more happy you will be with the pairing as a whole.

Each full screen black-and-white film appears on a separate platter. *Make Me a Star* is in quite good shape for an orphaned 1931 feature that MGM acquired only to enable the remake. Still, *Merton* looks much fresher, with smooth contrasts and minimal wear. The monophonic sound on both programs is passable. There is no captioning, and a trailer is included for *Merton*.

John Gilbert, blue collar and white collar

A fairly mature 1930 look at life in the Merchant Marine from MGM, **Way for a Sailor**, has been released by Warner Home Video as an *Archive Collection* title (UPC#888574205205, \$22). John Gilbert delivers a strikingly rich performance, quite unlike his more dashing roles, as a caddish roustabout falling for the girl in the cashier's office at his homeport, played by

Leila Hyams, while Wallace Beery is somewhat more predictable as his bullying shipmate. The film is reasonably frank when it comes to depicting exotic prostitutes in foreign ports, and those adventures offer an effective contrast to the worldly but unwilling attitude of Hyams' character. Running 85 minutes, ribald hijinks and high seas action (including a terrific storm sequence) give the film momentum, but it is the romance that redeems the entertainment, as Gilbert's character gradually and pointedly learns to respect the needs of Hyams' character, however much that conflicts with the world he is used to.

The full screen black-and-white picture is rather soft, and indistinct in darker sequences, but is workable. The monophonic sound is also aged, but adequate. There is no captioning.

Gilbert and Hyams also co-star in the more directly entertaining 1931 MGM production, **The Phantom of Paris**, another Warner *Archive Collection* title (UPC#888574295233, \$22), and it is the contrast between the performances in the two films that highlights how versatile and skilled Gilbert was, even in the talkies. He plays a suave stage magician who wants to marry the daughter of a wealthy social figure, much to the consternation of a desperate aristocrat who also wants to marry her. Hyams plays the daughter. The aristocrat murders her father and frames the hero for the crime. Running 71 minutes, the film follows the somewhat classic format of a French novel where the hero is removed from his loved ones for a very long time, but eventually reunites with them, and every segment as the tale unfolds is engaging. It is also stunning to see Gilbert act with such smoothness and cultivation after completely selling his presence as an average workman in **Way for a Sailor**. He also exhibits a great physical dexterity in both roles, and this was the guy they said was washed up when sound came to film? From the evidence at hand, that rumor seems more like the plot of another French novel, one, apparently, given Gilbert's demise just a few years later, where the villains succeed.

The full screen black-and-white picture is clearly antiquated, with weak contrasts at times and other marks of wear, but it is viewable. The monophonic sound is adequate, and there is no captioning. Lewis Stone, C. Aubrey Smith and Jean Hersholt co-star.

Photographer

A cute documentary profile of an accomplished but elderly photographer, **Duane Michals The Man Who Invented Himself**, is available from Alive Mind Cinema and Kino Lorber (UPC#738329147426, \$30). Running 89 minutes, the 2013 program is a compilation of vaguely humorous vignettes. Some are a bit juvenile, but most give the viewer a sense of Michals' creative sensibilities, or of his past. In one, for example, he visits the interior of a large clock and recites a poem about time. In another, he looks at various photographs laid out on a table, and riffs on what each one means to him. What you get a sense of as a whole is that while he probably isn't the greatest photographic artist who ever lived, he is competent in his craft and very comfortable in his own skin. Hence, the documentary is basically like visiting him at his home and being entertained for a while by his impulses.

The picture letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The picture quality looks fine, although the lighting has the usual compromises inherent to a documentary. The sound is centered, and clear, and there is no captioning. A brief collection of promotional stills is included, along with a trailer.

Keep Walking

We've been telling anybody who will listen that if they want to sample **The Walking Dead** and understand its brilliance, they should watch—and there is no need to see anything else beforehand—the fourteenth episode in **Fourth Season** (Oct 14), *The Grove*. There is no episode in the new Anchor Bay Entertainment AMC Blu-ray release, **The Walking Dead The Complete Fifth Season** (UPC#013132629001, \$80), that comes close to equaling the impact that episode has, but that is setting an unrealistic standard. **Fifth Season** is as terrific as the previous seasons have been. The show plateaus slightly, but it never really repeats itself. While it is the drama that holds the focus of one's memories after an episode or a season is concluded, you forget a little bit, until you get caught up again in actually watching the show, how fantastically exciting it is. You never know when the action is going to explode or what horrific image is going to appear next. But it is because the drama is so good that these excitements and horrors are worth indulging. They always mean something, because you care about the characters and their inner conflicts as much as you care about how they will get out of whatever predicament they find themselves in.

The season has fifteen 43-minute episodes and a final sixteenth episode, which runs 64 minutes, although the 'mid season break,' which occurs at the end of the eighth episode, effectively splits the season plot into two distinctive stories. In the first half, having survived the cliffhanger at the end of **Fourth Season**, the heroes come upon a church where a single survivor has sustained himself, and they use the building for their own protection as they make forays to gather supplies and regain their strength. Then some less accommodating individuals show up. Obviously, there is an exploration of morality and faith that builds up as the episodes advance, but it

is so organic to the setting that it never feels forced or overindulged. That is one of the reasons the show remains so satisfying—because the gore is abundant and the premise is so absurd, the philosophical contemplations are magnified on their own and do not need to be unduly emphasized. In the second half, the heroes come across a community that has managed to create the semblance of a normal life behind its gates, and unlike communities the heroes have encountered in the past, there is no dark secret underlying its existence. The residents, however, are somewhat naive about the nature of the world outside of their walls, and conflicts arise when they are confronted with the heroes' pragmatism.

The season is spread to four platters and each platter has a 'Play All' option. Beware, incidentally—some episodes have little codas after their end credit scrolls, so don't turn things off or jump to the next episode too quickly. The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1. The color transfer is flawless, and the special effects are seamless. The 7.1 DTS sound isn't quite as energetic as the sound mix on a blockbuster film, but it comes awfully close, with many terrific directional effects that get your heart rate pumping. There is also a French audio track in 5.1 Dolby and English and Spanish subtitles.

A fifth platter has 16 minutes of deleted scenes that fill some plot details here and there, and 186 minutes of good production featurettes, most built around what is being staged in each individual episode. One of the things we hate is when disc producers feel they must repeat a bad design flaw for the sake of consistency from one season of a TV show to the next, and that is what happens here. Like **Fourth Season**, the brief collection of deleted scenes has a 'Play All' option, but you have to access every one of the #!\$@! forty featurettes individually. And also, like **Fourth Season**, you have to guess which episodes are accompanied by the commentary tracks, since the only way to access the commentary indicator is to choose an individual episode for play. Either the episode starts playing, which means there is no commentary, or a commentary option appears. For the record, the first episode on the first platter has two commentaries, the first episode on the second platter has one, the first, second and fourth episodes on the third platter each have one, and the fourth episode on the fourth platter has one. Most of the commentaries feature various members of the cast—and often the cast member who gets killed in that episode—as they share general reminiscences about the shoot and working on the show, with the first and last commentaries geared more to production personnel. The talks are lighthearted ("It got so hot, I couldn't remember my lines." "I thought you just couldn't remember your lines.") and mildly informative.

Anchor's DVD release (UPC#013132628998, \$70) is also spread to five platters. The fifth platter has the same special features, and the same lack of a 'Play All' for them. The picture is only subliminally less compelling, as it has very strong colors and crisp details. The 5.1-channel Dolby Digital sound, however, does not have quite the same command of atmosphere that the BD has.

The irresistibly titled **Navy SEALs vs. Zombies**, another Anchor Blu-ray (UPC#013132626000, \$27), is, at 97 minutes, more than twice the length of an episode of **The Walking Dead**, and probably cost about half of what an episode costs to produce. What we realized immediately as we watched the feature is that every moment of gore in **Walking Dead**, even the moments captured in long shots, is carefully and specifically planned, so that you feel the full impact of its expression. In **SEALs vs. Zombies**, that doesn't happen. There is not a measured focus on the horror and the action. The director, Stanton Barrett, just sets up his shots, tries to capture some stuff, and then rushes on to the next set up. It prevents the film from being as exciting or engaging as it could be. You don't really feel like the heroes are SEALs, either, or any sort of tightly trained military group. But all of that said, the 2015 production is still an entertaining zombie movie. Set and shot in Baton Rouge, a SEAL team is sent in to extract a political official after some sort of bio terrorism turns most of the citizenry into raging eating machines and the city is otherwise cordoned off. There is even a satisfying ending, and the plot is generally easy to follow, with a decent momentum, although individual scenes are sometimes confusing and contradictory. Michael Dudikoff is featured as the base commander, talking to the heroes over the radio. Ed Quinn and Chad Lail are also featured.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1. Rather cleverly, a couple of zombies are shown having turned while driving in their cars, so that subsequent shots of Baton Rouge going about business as usual in the back of the zombie apocalypse can be justified. Generally, the computer effects are not bad for a shoestring budget, and the picture transfer looks fine. The 5.1-channel Dolby Digital sound is quite good, with a pleasing directional bass and a full dimensionality. There are English and Spanish subtitles.

More Revenge

Daily soap operas take their time advancing narratives, supplying just enough momentum to pull viewers back again later in the week, without enough that the viewer will be lost if a day or two is missed. Primetime soap operas, however, have to be in high gear all of the time to keep the viewer coming back from one week to the next. We reviewed the first season of **Revenge** in Aug 13, a soapy tale about scheming and criminal activities

among the ultra-rich. The better-known actress, Madeleine Stowe, is top billed as the villain, and Ellen Van Camp is the younger heroine, seeking retribution for injustice that was committed against her father. The show would have been great simply as a single season effort, but it upped the ante at the end, in anticipation of continuing the conundrums and betrayals to another season. The ABC Studios release, **Revenge The Complete Second Season** (UPC#786936830392, \$46), a five-platter collection of twenty-two 43-minute episodes, gets a little more ridiculous, but by then either you're totally hooked or you'd given up on it a while ago. What is enjoyable, besides the fantastic outfits, escapist settings, gorgeous stars (and earthy ones—Jennifer Jason Leigh has a major role in **Second Season**), and their delightful dialog exchanges (the scenes with Stowe and Van Camp are always exquisitely fanged), is that there are at least three or four big plot twists in every episode. You never grow tired of the show because something new and slightly crazy is always going on. It's dumb, but it's fun dumb.

Broadcast in 2012 and 2013, each platter has a 'Play All' option. The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The image is consistently glossy and smooth, as is the 5.1-channel Dolby Digital sound, which has a general dimensionality. There are optional English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese and Thai subtitles. Along with a 3-minute blooper reel and 26 minutes of good production featurettes that emphasize the costumes and the music, 41 minutes of deleted scenes are included, filling in many minor plot holes including, literally, where a body is buried. Three of the episodes are also accompanied by commentaries from a few members of the cast and the crew, talking about the characters, the narrative, the shooting conditions and other production details.

If **Second Season** seems to get a bit farfetched, **Revenge The Complete Third Season** (UPC#786936838862, \$46) dials everything back, returning to the show's roots, as it were. If you go straight from the grand cliffhanger finale of **Second Season** to the opening episode of **Third Season** without taking much of a break between, the blatant adjustments and 'never minds' are rather disrupting. Most notably, the mysterious super-agency that lurked behind all of the evil in the second season is adeptly dismissed in a few pieces of dialog, as is a plotline that one of the creators promised would be a 'major part' of the season in the commentary for the final episode of **Second Season**. A character who was gay in **First Season** but became not so gay in **Second Season** is back to being totally gay in **Third Season**. So take a breather before you get started again, but do get started again if you enjoyed **First Season**, because the show not only regains its promise, it also brings most of the major story points begun in the earlier seasons to a satisfactory conclusion, with just enough requisite cliffhangers to draw you back to a subsequent season.

The constant plot turns have been subdued in **Third Season**, but in their place is a richer, more traditional soap opera, which draws, as the very brief title sequence suggests, from real opera. There are still a few wonderful twists during the course of the season, which had us laughing or shouting aloud when they happened, but season's real appeal is its ability to sustain the focus on its core concept even as it manages to churn and churn the characters. Van Camp's character is more vulnerable, and her flaws leave you less sure that she will succeed or even that you will want her to succeed, at least for a while.

Originally broadcast in 2013 and 2014, twenty-two 43-minute episodes are spread to five platters and each platter has a 'Play All' option. The picture format and quality are the same as **Second Season**, as is the 5.1-channel Dolby Digital sound and the subtitling options. The special features are also dialed back a little. There is a marvelous 13-minute talk with the five central male performers in the show, along with a 4-minute blooper reel, 19 minutes of deleted scenes that include a couple of steamy interludes, and a single commentary track featuring several of the show's producers, who talk in general terms about the production of the season and how great it is working with everyone.

The show does really bring everything to a close (except for the possibility of spin-off) with **Revenge The Complete Fourth & Final Season** (UPC#786936845501, \$46), and if you have hung with it that long, then the finale is an utter delight. Every one of the twenty-three 43-minute episodes, originally broadcast in 2014 and 2015, seems to conclude with a cliffhanger that any other series would use to end a season. The story turns and turns and turns, but each twist is constructed with reasonable logic from what has occurred previously, as the story narrows its focus to the two leads and their immediate circles, acknowledging the outside world only in crowd scenes and press stories. The show's combination of camp and glitz—the outfits are sometimes as exciting as the plot turns—is way too much fun to begrudge, and since the story never slows down, the action never becomes tiresome or repetitive. Even the inclusion of a recap episode is inspired, as it is loaded with significant plot turns, which are carefully dropped in between each recap sequence. The final scene with Van Camp and Stowe will have you standing on your couch and applauding.

The picture and sound quality is the same as in the previous seasons, as are the subtitling options. There are 5 minutes of cute bloopers and 16 minutes of sensibly deleted scenes, some of which contain a few minor revelations, although the fate of one significant character, left up in the air in the series itself, remains unanswered.

Contemptible comedy

A contemptible British comedy so misogynistic that it makes Neil LaBute seem like a feminist, **All Neat in Black Stockings** is a 1969 National General production released by Warner Home Video as an *Archive Collection* title (UPC#888574142940, \$22). Even the film's ad art, replicated on the DVD's jacket cover, is bizarrely bad (to the point, perhaps, of sabotage by the artist), guaranteed to scare away the one constituency of boorish male viewers that might otherwise be attracted to the film's frolics. Victor Henry is a window washer who obsessively chases after women, only to trade them off with his best friend or otherwise treat them contemptibly after he has gotten what he wanted. The center of the story is then taken up with his obsession over one girl, played by a very young and enticing Susan George (doing a Julie Christie thing, basically), so that you think that he is gaining sensitivity and that the first part of the film can be excused for the journey he makes into the second part. The film is also embellished with slapstick humor evoking the general anarchy of the Swinging Sixties. Spoiler alert, however. At the end, the hero just returns to his old ways, as if that were part of his charm. We never cared much for the classic in this particularly British genre, **Alfie** (Mar 97), but even that film was cognizant of the insensitivity and moral vacuity of its hero, and purposeful in its view of his transgressions. **Stockings** can and even should serve as a basic textbook in any general women's studies program. But did the filmmakers really think that this character would be appealing? Was society at the time that accepting? It was only dire curiosity—okay, and our hots for George—that sustained us through the 98-minute movie, which is otherwise a genuine travesty, not so much because it is telling the unfettered truth about how men operate, but because it is celebrating that truth so enthusiastically.

The presentation is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The colors look fresh, although there are a few speckles. The monophonic sound is a bit harsh, but reasonably strong strong, and there is a genuinely decent jazz score by Robert Cornford.

Wacky Franco

An utterly wacky and ridiculous 1972 Jess Franco film, **The Erotic Rites of Frankenstein**, has been issued as a *Redemption* title by Salvation and Kino Lorber Incorporated (UPC#738329181727, \$25). Trying to summarize the plot is somewhat pointless, but the movie, a costume film set in the days of horse-drawn carriages, does have a vague narrative orientation, in which a scientist creates a robot monster, and is then murdered by another nutty scientist who is bent upon controlling people's minds, and also creating a 'perfect' woman bride for the monster he has stolen. A pair of detectives bring the dead scientist back to life, so they can ask who killed him and track the murderer down, and the scientist's daughter then does the same thing, to find the murderer and get her revenge. They all bump into one another at the murderer's castle, just as the new perfect woman is starting to twitch a bit. The murderer also has another woman hanging around, who thinks she is a bird, or acts like a bird or something. While all of this sounds like it might make a catchy midnight musical, the 74-minute program is actually a convoluted mess of styles and erotic diversions, its primary appeal coming from the way in which you have absolutely no idea what is going to happen next.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The film is in French with optional English subtitles, but there is also an English audio track that isn't bad, not that there is really much dialog in the movie as a whole, anyway. Along with a trailer, there is an excellent commentary track by the encyclopedic film historian Tim Lucas, which is so good it almost makes getting the movie worthwhile. Lucas delves into the backgrounds and talents of every player in the film and practically every crewmember as well. He provides a comprehensive history of the film's production, and analyzes the reasoning behind the inclusion of its various components. Franco, having grown up in Fascist Spain, for example, made many movies about mind control. Lucas also supplies an amazing history of the depiction of Frankenstein's monster as a robot, something that began long before motion pictures.

DVD News

TAKING IT WITH YOU: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment's Blu-ray release of **You Can't Take It With You** will have a commentary and a retrospective documentary. **Pixels** will have featurettes.

VACATION EXTRAS: Warner Home Video's **Vacation** will have deleted scenes and featurettes. **The Gallows** will have featurettes and deleted scenes.

LATEST CRITERION ANNOUNCEMENTS: The Criterion Collection is issuing Michael Ritchie's **Downhill Racer**, which will have interviews from 2009 with Robert Redford, screenwriter James Salter, editor Richard Harris, production manager Walter Coblenz, and former downhill skier Joe Jay Jalbert, who served as a technical adviser, ski double, and cameraman on the film; audio excerpts from a 1977 American Film Institute seminar with Ritchie; and *How Fast?*, a rare twelve-minute promotional feature from 1969. **Speedy**, with Harold Lloyd, will include a commentary featuring Bruce Goldstein, director of repertory programming at New York's

Film Forum, and Turner Classic Movies director of program production, Scott McGee; *In the Footsteps of Speedy*, a short documentary by Goldstein about the film's New York shoot; a selection of rare archival footage from UCLA Film & Television Archive's Hearst Newsreel Collection of baseball legend Babe Ruth, who has a cameo in the film, presented by David Filippi, director of film and video at the Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus, Ohio; a visual essay featuring stills of deleted scenes from the film and narrated by Goldstein; a selection of Lloyd's home movies, narrated by his granddaughter, Suzanne Lloyd; and *Bumping into Broadway*, a 1919 Lloyd two-reeler, newly restored and with a 2004 score by Robert Israel. **Jellyfish Eyes** will have an interview with director Takashi Murakami and two behind-the-scenes documentaries on the making of the film, along with a trailer for a sequel. **Burroughs The Movie**, a 1983 Howard Bookner documentary, will include interviews with filmmakers Jim Jarmusch, Aaron Brookner, and Tom DiCillo, as well as William S. Burroughs's friends and fellow writers James Grauerholz and Stewart Meyer; rare outtakes; footage from the 2014 New York Film Festival premiere of the film's restoration; and a 30-minute experimental edit of the film from 1981 by inventor and photographer Robert E. Fulton Jr.

PALESTINIAN CINEMA: A survey of Palestinian filmmakers and films has been compiled on the arabfilm.com release, **Cinema Palestine**.

TWILIGHT'S LATEST: The latest Blu-ray releases from Twilight Time include **Grizzly** and the 1984 remake of **Where the Boys Are**.

ARCHIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS: The latest releases from Warner Home Video's *Archive Collection* include **The Beginning or the End**, **Directed by John Ford**, **Hanna-Barbera Specials Collection** (*The Adventures of Robin Hood*, *Oliver and the Artful Dodger*, *The Three Musketeers*, *Cyrano*), **The Hoodlum Saint**, **Jack and the Beanstalk TV Special**, **Lucky Night**, **Murder My Sweet** (Blu-ray), **Please Believe Me**, **Spencer for Hire Season 3**, **Straight Time**, **Twice upon a Time** and **Wide Sargasso Sea**.

NEW IN BLU: The following titles have recently been released on Blu-ray—Aquarius, Heaven Knows What (Anchor Bay); The Avengers Age of Ultron, Cinderella, Disneynature Monkey Kingdom (Buena Vista); Angst, Citizen Toxie The Toxic Avenger 4, Moriturus LEgions of the Dead, Turkey Shoot (CAV); The Connection, The Editor, The Legacy, Shocker, WWE Monday Night War V.2 Know Your Role, WWE Summer Slam (Cinedigm); Blind Chance, Breaker Morant, The Honeymoon Killers, Mister Johnson, Moonrise Kingdom, A Room with a View (Criterion); Tokyo Ghoul Complete Series (Goldhil); Nightingale (HBO); Children of the Night (Kino); The Age of Adaline, American Heist, Chain of Command, Love and Mercy, Zatoichi (Lionsgate); Nowitzki The Perfect Shot, Results (Magnolia); Unexpected, Zipper (Millennium); The Duke of Burgundy (MPI); Black Caesar, Blumenthal, Cinco De Mayo, Deadliest Prey, Deadly Prey, Deuces Wild, Dirty Work, Fatal Instinct, For Us the Living Medgar Evans Story, The Invisible Monster, Killer Workout, Mad Dog Time, Madhouse, The Mod Squad, Prick Up Your Ears, Shock Em Dead, Slaughter, Some Kind of Hero, SFW, Trashology (Olive); NCIS Season 12 (Paramount); 24 Days (Passion River); Aloft, Christine, The Last Dragon, Outlander Season 1 V.2, Saint Laurent (Sony); Empire Season 1, Homeland Season 4, Poltergeist, Sleepy Hollow Season 2, Spy (Fox); Barbie in Rock 'N Royals, Billy Elliot, Cop Car, The Family Man, Furious 7, Grimm Season 4, Identity Thief, Jarhead 2 Field of Fire, The Life of David Gale, Love Actually, The Man Who Wasn't There, Monster High Boo York Boo York, Pitch Perfect 2, Supernatural Season 10, Thomas & Friends Sodor's Legend of the lost Treasure (Universal); Ranma ½ Set 7 (Viz); Arrow Season 3, The Big Bang Theory Season 8, Doctor Who Dark Water/Death in Heaven, Dog Day Afternoon, Entourage The Movie, The Flash Season 1, Gotham Season 1 (Warner); Black Coal, Thin Ice (Well Go USA)

DVD and LD Ads

(All DVD and LD Ads are 50 cents a word. Deadline is 5 business days before the end of the month. Address all ads: DVD & LD Ads, The DVD-Laser Disc Newsletter, PO Box 420, East Rockaway NY 11518-0420.)

We are happy to announce the availability of our latest book, *DVDs by Douglas Pratt*, as a .pdf file on CD-ROM for \$15.95, plus \$3 s&h (\$6 s&h overseas). It contains more than 13,000 reviews of DVDs and Blu-rays, including those that appeared in last month's issue. Current subscribers to The DVD-Laser Disc Newsletter can receive a copy of the .pdf file via Internet download for \$7.95. Just write to The DVD-Laser Disc Newsletter at PO Box 420, East Rockaway NY 11518, or email us at DPratt@DVDLaser.com, or fax a request to (516)594-9307.

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE A complete collection of DVD-Laser Disc Newsletter back issues in PDF format, spanning from Sep 84 to last month, is available on two double-layer DVD-ROM platters for \$64.95, plus \$6 shipping (\$12 shipping overseas). Title indexes are included on each platter. Write to The DVD-Laser Disc Newsletter at PO Box 420, East Rockaway NY 11518, or email us at DPratt@DVDLaser.com, or fax a request to (516)594-9307.

Coming Attractions

The following select DVD titles are promised for the near future. How many of them will show up is never a certainty. Logical subdivisions appear unmarked within each division. Titles which did not appear on last month's list are marked with an arrow (➔) and are added to the bottom of subdivisions so that the longest awaited titles appear at the top within each grouping:

From A&E: Blood and Glory The Civil War in Color Duck Dynasty Season 8 An En Vogue Christmas ➔The Curse of Oak Island Season 2 ➔If There Be Thorns/Seeds of Yesterday ➔Whitney/Aaliyah ➔2015 World Series Film **From Acorn:** Detectorists ➔The Code Season 1 **From Anchor Bay:** Passion of Michael King Boulevard Earthfall The Anomaly Apartment Troubles Escobar Paradise Lost Golden Shoes Party Down Complete Series Navy Seals vs. Zombies Chuggington Wilson and the Dinosaur Chuggington The Big Freeze The Making of the Mob New York Boulevard Black Sails Season 2 Road Hard ➔I Spit on Your Grave 3 Vengeance Is Mine ➔Southpaw ➔A Lego Brickumentary ➔Shelby A Magical Holiday Tail ➔Before We Go **From Anderson:** The One I Wrote for You Pants on Fire Pod Mateo Badge of Honor Toxin ➔Amnesiac ➔Chloe & Theo **From Breaking Glass:** ➔Short Skin **From Buena**

Vista: Sheriff Callie's Wild West Tomorrowland Toy Story That Time Forgot Inside Out ➔Doc McStuffins Pet Vet **From CAV:** 42nd Street Forever - The Peep Show Collection Vol. 12 42nd Street Forever - The Peep Show Collection Vol. 13 Manos Hands of Fate Special Edition Mosquito Day 6 Sodoma Dark Side of Gomorrah Sexual Assault at a Hotel Inferno/Marathon The Senually Liberated Female/He and She Hyde's Secret Nightmare The Jail Pro Wrestlers vs. Zombies Theatre of the Deranged II Class of Nuke 'Em High 3 The Voyeur Turkey Shoot **From Cinedigm:** American Genius Best Christmas Party Ever Bossip Comedy Series 2 Brain Games Season 6 Caroline and the Magic Potion Christmas at Cartwright's Dumb It Down The Falling Final Girl 4got10 Good Witch Season 1 Kindness Is Contagious Knifed Up The Magic School Bus Season 4 Martian Land National Geographic Anne Frank's Holocaust Pelican Red vs. Blue Season 13 Richard Attenborough Collection (Hell Is Sold Out, Boys in Brown, Sea of Sand, Morning Departure) Shark Killer Sharknado 3 Oh Hell No 2015 Stanley Cup Champions WWE Sting Into the Light ➔Automan Complete Series Christmas Tail Christmas Trade ➔D.W. Griffith's Birth of the Nation 2015 Centennial Edition Gravy ➔The Holy Family

Jesus Mary and Joseph Jessie Matthews V.1 (There Goes the Bride, The Man from Toronto, The Good Companions, Friday the Thirteenth, First a Girl) Jessie Matthews V.2 (Head over Heels, It's Love Again, Gangway, Sailing Along, Climbing High) Krampus The Christmas Devil ➔Let's Live Again/The Gay Intruders ➔Manimal Complete Series A Matter of Faith ➔Nathan for You ➔National Geographic Diggers Season 4 ➔National Geographic Port Protection ➔National Geographic Rocky Mountain Law ➔National Geographic Southern Justice Season 2 ➔National Geographic Wicked Tuna Outer Banks Season 2 The Nutcracker Sweet Paper Angels ➔Stung ➔War Pigs When Calls the Heart, Follow Your Heart WWE Hell in a Cell 2015 ➔WWE Night of Champions 2015 WWE Owen Hart of Gold WWE Ring in the Holiday WWE SummerSlam WWE Survivor Series 2015 Yu-Gi-Oh! Zexal Season 2 Zarafa **From Cinema Libre:** ➔I Am the Queen **From Criterion:** Mulholland Drive A Special Day The Brood Kwaiden Julien Duvivier in the Thirties (David Golder, Poil de carotte, La tête d'un homme, Un carnet de bal) The Apu Trilogy In Cold Blood Ikuru Dont Look Back ➔Downhill Racer ➔Speedy ➔Jellyfish Eyes ➔Burroughs The Movie **From eOne:** In the Courtyard ➔Hunter ➔Secrets of a Psychopath **From Etiquette:** American Dreamer

From Film Buff: Southbounders **From FilmRise:** ➔Going Clear Scientology and the Prison of Belief **From Flicker Alley:** Masterworks of American Avant-garde Experimental Film 1920-1970 Sherlock Holmes (1916) Chaplin's ESSNAY Comedies **From Garden Thieves:** Blood Cells ➔Tibetan Warrior **From Goldhill:** ➔One Piece Season 7 V.3 ➔Dance in the Vampire Bund Complete Series ➔Fafner Complete Series ➔One Piece V.14 **From Green Apple:** The Drunk **From Hen's Tooth:** ➔Close My Eyes ➔Croupier **From Icarus:** Dark Star H.R. Giger's World The Forgotten Space Five Films by Patrick Guzman (The Battle for Chile, Nostalgia for the Light, The Pinochet Case, Salvador Allende, Chile Obsinate Memory) ➔Beltracchi The Art of Forgery ➔Gringo Trails **From Image:** The Invoking 2 June **From Indican:** #1 Serial Killer The Book Club The Glass Man Windsor Drive Me You and Five Bucks Death Valley Red Herring The Peaky Blinders **From Kino:** Love Battles It's Hard Being Loved by Jerks Güeros Moby Dick (Huston) Support Your Local Sheriff Support Your Local Gunfighter Young Billy Young Man with the Gun Savage Weekend Deutschland 83 The Last Impresario Love and Engineering The Heart Machine The Great Museum The Human Experiment Awake The Life of Yogananda Arabian Nights ➔Slam Dance ➔The Oblong Box ➔Lillies of the Field ➔Fever ➔Burnt Offerings

➔Bad Man's River Old 37 ➔Captain Apache People Places Things 2 Bedroom 1 Bath Skin Traffik ➔After Words ➔Lucky Number ➔Marry Me for Christmas ➔Operator ➔Lavalantula ➔Charlie's Farm ➔Brothers of War **From Monarch:** The Sand Merry Ex-Mas Christmas Mix **From Monterey:** ➔Forever **From MPI:** Soul Boys of the Western World The Stranger Manglehorn We Are Still Here Call Me Lucky ➔Hungry Hearts ➔Mexico Barbaro ➔Seymour An Introduction ➔Do I Sound Gay? **From Music Box:** Alleluia **From Music Video Distributors:** Songwriters Season 1 Jobriath AD Blood Rage Tenderness of the Wolves Edgar Allan Poe's Black Cats (Fulci and Martino) The Beast Immoral Tales Requiescant The Mutilator Tulpa Forbidden Zone Salad Days: A Decade of Punk in Washington, DC (1980-90) ➔Just Jim **From Olive:** ➔King of the Hill Season 13 ➔Phase IV ➔Blue City ➔No Mans Woman ➔One & Only ➔Partners ➔Mandingo ➔Dr. Terror's House of Horrors ➔Stephen King's Sometimes They Come Back ➔Impromptu ➔The Deadly Bees ➔Flying Disc Man from Mars ➔A Black Veil for Lisa **From Paramount:** Avartar The Last Airbender Complete Series Bubble Guppies the Puppy and the Ring ➔Digging for Fire ➔Extant Season 2 The Greatest Heroes of the Bible Complete Collection HAPPYish Season 1 ➔Indian Summers ➔Inside Amy Schumer Season 3 ➔Masterpiece: Home Fires

PAW Patrol Marshall and Chase on the Case! Penny Dreadful Season 2 ➔Science & Word Play: Blaze and the Monster Machines: Blaze of Glory & Wallykazam! South Park Season 18 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Cowabunga Christmas Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Meet Casey Jones! ➔Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Revenge! Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles The Shredder Strikes! ➔Terminator Genisys Tut ➔Zoo Season 1 **From Passion River:** Struggle The Outrageous Sophie Tucker Black Beauty Breed Life after Death from Above 1979 Capturing Grace Bronx Obama ➔Twinsters **From Peace Arch:** Lila & Eve Doomsday Death Machine **From Pure Flix:** ➔Faith of Our Fathers **From Right Stuff:** Spotlight The Rose of Versailles V.2 Mobile Suit Gundam V.1 Turn A Gundam Movies Umi Monogatari Complete Collection ➔Mobile Suit Gundam Part 2 DVD Collection **From Shout:** Olympus Season 1 Bloodsucking Bastards **From SISU:** Zubin Mehta Zubin and I Dialogues Jews in America & Divine Destiny Stories of a Young Country Enough Already White Panther Chasing a Star The Ballad of the Weeping Spring The Dealers ➔Hora 79 ➔A Place in Heaven ➔Up the Wrong **From SnagFilms:** We Made This Movie **From Sony:** Extinction Dead Rising Watchtower Air Insidious Chapter 3 Testament of Youth

Aloft Saint Laurent ➔The Toho Godzilla Collection V.1 ➔The Toho Godzilla Collection V.2 ➔Pixels ➔Ricki and the Flash ➔Better Call Saul Season 1 **From 20th Century Fox:** Vikings Season 3 American Horror Story Freak Show AD The Bible Continues Me and Earl and the Dying Girl Wayward Pines Season 1 The Exorcism of Molly Hartley Paper Towns ➔Santa's Little Helper ➔Desert Dancer **From Universal:** The Adventures of Raggedy Ann & Andy Complete Collection Frank Sinatra Sinatra: London Curve Tremors 5 Bloodlines Visions Dragon Nest Warriors' Dawn Girlfriends' Guide to Divorce Season 1 Bates Motel Season 3 Barney's Worldwide Adventure Aesthetica of a Rogue Hero: The Complete Series Back to the Future The Complete Animated Series 1000 Saints When Marnie Was There Paper Soldiers Billy Elliot The Musical Live Dope Gloria Jurassic World Barbie in a Christmas Carol Barbie in the Nutcracker Barbie a Perfect Christmas Barbie & Her Sisters in The Great Puppy Adventure Thomas & Friends: Thomas' Christmas Carol Mrs. Brown's Boys ➔The Gift ➔7 Chinese Brothers ➔Getting On Season 2 ➔Self/Less ➔Trainwreck ➔Jeff Dunham Unhinged in Hollywood ➔90 Minutes in Heaven ➔Defiance Season 3 ➔Dominion Season 2 ➔Kurt Cobain Montage of Heck **From Virgil:** Valley of Saints

National Geographic Mysteries of the Unseen World National Geographic Pandas The Journey Home River between Us ➔Girls in the Band ➔Tap World ➔Matt Shepard Is a Friend of Mine ➔American Bear ➔Dislecksia The Movie ➔The Only Real Game **From Viz:** The Last Naruto the Movie Sailor Moon R Season 2 V.2 Naruto Shippuden V.24 **From Warner:** Batkid Begins Wish Heard around the World Batman Season 3 Blackwood Cannon Films Collection Cartoon Network Adventure Time Finn the Human Cartoon Network Over the Garden Wall Cartoon Network Regular Show The Movie DCI Banks Season 3 Death in Paradise Season 3 Elf: Buddy's Musical Christmas Festive Follies Collection The Following Season 3 ➔The Gallows He's a Bully Charlie Brown Hidden The Hobbit The Battle of the Five Armies Extended Edition Impractical Jokers Season 3 Last of the Summer Wine 2005 The Leftovers Season 1 Magic Mike XXL Max Mike Tyson Mysteries Season 1 The 100 Season 2 Peaky Blinders Reign Season 2 San Andreas Scott & Bailey Season 3 Shark Silent Witness Season 2 Tatau The Trail Let Go Let God ➔Vacation **From WEA:** ➔The Midnight Special ➔Jay Pharoah Can I Be Me? **From Well Go USA:** The Timber The Raid The Avenging Fist ➔Northern Limit Lane ➔The Golden Cane Warrior

An index to the reviews contained in this issue

DVDs

All Neat in Black Stockings p10
 Arrow in the Dust p7
 Big Game p3
 Duane Michals The Man Who Invented Himself p8
 The Erotic Rites of Frankenstein p10
 The Happiness of the Katakuris p6
 Hostage Flight p7
 Into the Grizzly Maze p7
 Jigoku p2
 The Jinx p3
 Make Me a Star/Merton of the Movies p8
 (Merton of the Movies) p8
 Moonrise Kingdom p1
 Navajo Joe p6
 The Phantom of Paris p8

Quick! before it melts. p8
 Return of the Frontiersman p3
 Revenge The Complete Second Season p9
 Revenge The Complete Third Season p9
 Revenge The Complete Fourth & Final Season p9
 Run of the Arrow p6
 The Taking of Tiger Mountain p3
 Verboten! p6
 The Walking Dead The Complete Fifth Season p8
 Way for a Sailor p8

BDs

The American Dreamer p4
 The Color of Outer Space p1
 Contamination p5
 Cop Car p2
 Entourage The Movie p4
 Face to Face p6
 The Happiness of the Katakuris p6
 House of 1000 Dolls p7
 House p2
 Man in the Dark 3D p4
 Moonrise Kingdom p1
 Navy SEALs vs. Zombies p9
 Pit Stop p5
 A Reason to Live, A Reason to Die p3
 The Walking Dead The Complete Fifth Season p8

Current Attractions

The following titles recently appeared for the first time:

AB Negative (MVD)
 The Age of Adaline (Lionsgate)*
 All American High (Virgil)
 Alvin and the Chipmunks Meet Frankenstein (Universal)
 Alvin and the Chipmunks Meet The Wolfman (Universal)
 American Experience Walt Disney (Paramount)
 American Heist (Lionsgate)
 Amnesia (Anderson)
 Angst (CAV)
 Aquarius Season 1 (Anchor Bay)
 Arrow Season 3 (Warner)
 Avengers Age of Ultron (Buena Vista)
 Banksy Does New York (Kino)
 Barbie in Rock 'N Royals (Universal)
 Beat the Devil (Film Detective)*
 Beyond the Mask (Anderson)*
 The Big Bang Theory Season 8 (Warner)
 Big Sky (Peace Arch)
 Bill Maher Live from DC (HBO)
 Black Caesar (Olive)
 Black Coal, Thin Ice (Well Go USA)
 Bleach Box Set 26 (Viz)
 Blind Chance (Criterion)
 Blue Bloods Season 5 (Paramount)
 Blumenthal (Olive)
 Boarding House (Olive)
 Bones Season 10 (Fox)
 The Breach (Kino)
 Breaker Morant (Criterion)
 British Noir Five Film Collection (Kino)
 Brooklyn Nine Nine Season 2 (Universal)
 Buzzard (Oscilloscope)
 Care Bears Mystery in Care-A-Lot (Lionsgate)
 Cartoon Network Over the Garden Wall (Warner)
 Cemetery Sisters (Olive)
 Chain of Command (Lionsgate)
 Checkmate (Millennium)
 Children of the Night (Kino)
 Cinderella (Buena Vista)
 Cinco De Mayo (Olive)
 Clarence Dust Buddies V.2 (Warner)
 Closer to the Moon (MPI)
 The Connection (Cinedigm)
 Containment (Millennium)
 Cop Car (Universal)
 CSI Cyber Season 1 (Paramount)
 CSI Season 15 (Paramount)
 Deadly Prey (Olive)
 Dealer (Kino)
 Deadliest Prey (Olive)
 Death Nurse (Olive)
 Death Nurse 2 (Olive)
 The Dempsey Sisters (Millennium)
 Digimon Fusion Season 1 V.1 (Cinedigm)
 Dust Devil (Lionsgate)
 Eaten Alive (MVD)
 Electric Boogaloo The Wild Untold Story of Cannon Films (Warner)

Empire Season 1 (Fox)
 Entourage The Movie (Warner)
 The Epic of Everest (Kino)
 Faith of Our Fathers (Pure Flix)
 Falling Star (IndiePix)
 The Farewell Party (First Run)
 Felix & Meira (Oscilloscope)
 52 Tuesdays (Kino)
 Flamenco Flamenco (Music Box)
 Flash Season 1 (Warner)
 Flesh and Bullets (CAV)
 For Us the Living The Medgar Evers Story (Olive)
 Fresh off the Boat Season 1 (Fox)
 The Front Page (Kino)
 Furious 7 (Universal)
 Gemma Boverly (Music Box)
 The Goldbergs Season 2 (Sony)
 Gotham Season 1 (Warner)
 Grimm Season 4 (Universal)
 Happy Valley Season 1 (Warner)
 Haunting at the Rectory (Millennium)
 Heal for Free (Passion River)
 Heaven Knows What (Anchor Bay)
 Hello Ladies Season 1 & Movie (HBO)
 Hidden Agenda (Kino)
 Hill Street Blues Season 6 (Cinedigm)
 Hollow Triumph (Film Detective)*
 Homeland Season 4 (Fox)
 I Knew It Was You Rediscovering John Cazale (Warner)
 In the Name of My Daughter (eOne)
 The Infinite Man (MVD)
 The Invisible Monster (Olive)
 Irwing & Fran (eOne)
 iZombie Season 1 (Warner)
 Jack Strong (Millennium)
 Jane the Virgin Season 1 (Warner)
 The Jinx The Life and Deaths of Robert Durst (HBO)
 Killer Workout (Olive)
 King of the Hill Season 12 (Olive)
 King's Heart (eOne)
 The Last Man on Earth Season 1 (Fox)
 Leapfrog Letter Factory Adventures Great Shape Mystery (Lionsgate)
 LEGO Star Wars The New Yoda Chronicles Complete Collection (Buena Vista)
 Little Glory (eOne)
 Love & Mercy (Lionsgate)
 Mad Dog Time (Olive)
 Madcow (CAV)
 Madhouse (Olive)
 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse Mickey's Monster Musical (Buena Vista)
 Misery Loves Company (Cinedigm)
 Miss Marple Complete Collection (Warner)
 Mister Johnson (Criterion)
 Modern Family Season 6 (Fox)
 Monster High Boo York Boo York (Universal)
 Moonrise Kingdom (Criterion)
 Moriturus Legions of the Dead (CAV)
 A Murder in the Park (MPI)
 Mr. Belvedere Season 4 (Cinedigm)
 The Nanny Season 4 (Cinedigm)
 National Geographic Animal Fight Night Season 3

(Cinedigm)*
 Nelson Mandela and More Inspiring Stories (Cinedigm)
 The New Stone Soup in American Sign Language (DawnSign)*
 Nightingale (HBO)
 Nowitzki The Perfect Shot (Magnolia)
 On Her Bed of Roses/The Incredible Sex Revolution (CAV)
 The 100 Year Old Man Who Climbed Out of the Window and Disappeared (Music Box)
 The Other Side (Indican)
 Outlander Season 1 V.2 (Sony)
 The Overnight (Paramount)
 Paper Planes (Peace Arch)
 Patch Town (Kino)
 Pitch Perfect 2 (Universal)
 Play Motel (Kino)
 Poltergeist (Fox)
 Pop Life (Cinedigm)
 Power Rangers Trickster Treat (Lionsgate)
 Prick Up Your Ears (Olive)
 Pulsating Flesh/Super Sex (CAV)
 Pups United (Lionsgate)
 Queen & Country (Warner)
 Queen Crab (Wild Eye)*
 R.L. Stein's Monsterville Cabinet of Souls (Universal)
 Results (Magnolia)
 The Red Road Season 2 (Anchor Bay)
 Return to Sender (Image)
 The Returned (A&E)*
 Rock 'n' Roll Revue and Rhythm & Blues Revue (Film Chest)*
 A Room with a View (Criterion)
 Salt of the Earth (Film Detective)*
 The Satan Bug (Kino)*
 Secrets of the Fall (Monarch)
 Sesame Street Play All Day with Elmo (Warner)
 The Seven Five (MPI)
 Shock Em Dead (Olive)
 The Slap (Acorn)
 Slaughter (Olive)
 Sleepy Hollow Season 2 (Fox)
 Soaked in Bleach (MVD)
 Some Kind of Hero (Olive)
 Soul Boys of the Western World (MPI)
 SpongeBob SquarePants The Adventures of SpongeBob SquarePants (Paramount)
 Spy (Fox)
 The Suicide Theory (Anderson)
 Supernatural Season 10 (Warner)
 Swamp Monsters Season 1 (Cinedigm)
 Swat Unit 887 (Millennium)
 Theresa is a Mother (Garden Thieves)*
 Trashology (Olive)
 Unexpected (Millennium)
 Unforgettable (Kino)
 United Passions (Universal)
 WWE Monday Night War V.2 Know Your Role (Cinedigm)
 WWE SummerSlam (Cinedigm)
 Yu-Gi-Oh Zexal Season 2 (Cinedigm)
 Zipper (Millennium)

*Did not appear on last month's *Coming Attractions* listing